GLIMPSES OF OUR LOCAL PAST

J.C. Manning

1895

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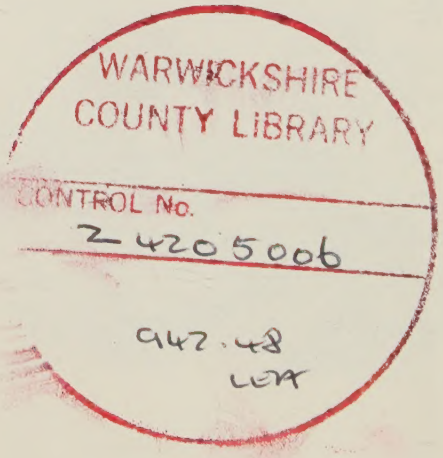

GLIMPSES

OF

OUR LOCAL PAST

INCIDENTAL TO THE

RISE AND PROGRESS

OF

ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA.

By J. C. MANNING
(Member of the Institute of Journalists).

Leamington Spa:
Published by FRANK GLOVER, at the *Courier* Office,
Church Walk.

MDCCCLXXXXV.

TO LORD

ALGERNON MALCOLM ARTHUR PERCY

OF GUY'S CLIFFE,

WHOSE RELATIVE,

LORD CHARLES BERTIE PERCY,

BROTHER OF

HIS GRACE THE FIFTH

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND,

BY MARRIAGE WITH THE GRAND-DAUGHTER OF

BERTIE BERTIE GREATHEAD, ESQ.,

BECAME ALLIED TO THE FAMILY OF THAT PUBLIC BENEFACTOR TO WHOSE LIBERALITY LEAMINGTON MAINLY OWES ITS REMARKABLE DEVELOPMENT,

THIS VOLUME IS BY PERMISSION

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY HIS OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE chapters which make up this contribution to the Topography of Warwickshire first appeared in the columns of the *Leamington Spa Courier*. The opening chapter was intended as the first of two or three instalments only, giving a history of the rise and progress of the *Courier* from the year of its birth in 1828 to 1894, when its proprietor acceded to the popular demand for the all-prevailing popular price. For these instalments I had selected the title, "The Autobiography of a Printer's Devil." After the first chapter was written, however, the project broadened out from a history of a newspaper to something akin to the history of a town, with whose best interests that paper has been persistently loyal in identifying itself. Hence the altered title, "Glimpses of our Local Past," and the more enlarged work. I offer this explanation because the first chapter, written before the idea of extension arose, may appear somewhat detached and apart from the chronological order of the narrative.

The unaccountable error as to the date of Benjamin Satchwell's death, that has marked the chronological annals of Leamington for the past eighty years, was detected while the work was in progress. The development of the discovery, which presented itself to me while comparing the dates of past official records with those already published, is shown in Chapter V., between the publication of which and the production of Chapter VI. the parochial registers were examined. with the result as I have explained it. It is a curious historical fact, almost unparalleled, I should think, that this error should have passed into all the published literature in reference to the death—certainly into all I myself have hitherto seen—and should even have appeared on the tomb of the deceased, placed there, as the records show, by his own daughter.

The object I have had in view throughout these "Glimpses" has been to make clear many topographical and historical facts in connection with the Village Spa that are not realised by the present generation. Many of these facts have remained unchronicled as far as I know. It seemed to me, therefore, that they were in a fair way of being lost altogether. I have also given to Benjamin Satchwell and to William Abbotts what I believe to be their true relative places in our local history, in the hope that, as the business enterprise of one, and the strikingly-useful work of the other in the interest of his native village, become more distinctly realised, the memory of both will remain green in the estimation of that larger community of which they were the chief pioneers, and their names be ever associated prominently with the beautiful and historic Spa of which, with others, in the years that are gone, they were mainly instrumental in laying the solid and enduring foundation.

These fugitive "Glimpses" have no pretensions to be regarded as a History of Leamington. Much more is on record with regard to the distant past than has yet been brought to light, and the fuller and more complete story of the village is to be had for the searching. All I claim for these pages is the mission of having brought into shape and form something that will serve as a foundation for later builders. If what I have written should aid or stimulate in this future construction, my object will have been achieved, and I shall rest satisfied in the knowledge that the little I have done has created in others a keener desire to broaden and to brighten into a still greater and more brilliant future the splendid inheritance intrusted to their keeping, and the determination on their part to do justice to the memory of those loyal citizens of the past who bequeathed it to them.

J. C. MANNING.

London, May, 1895.

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GLIMPSES OF

OUR LOCAL PAST.

CHAPTER I.

The Old and the New—A Luminous Triumvirate—Pioneers of Prosperity—The Two Jameses—A Split in the Camp—John Fairfax—A Tritton among Minnows—A Sun.

OLD Town and New Town! This distinction has long since passed away, for the Old has become New, the New Old, and in place of both is to be seen one united and attractive whole. When I was born there was a tradition growing up that Leamington was destined for great things—that a new and glorious town was one day to crown the upper slopes that were as yet shining grassy-green in the sun. Some of the portents were already tangible in one or two far-away streets and suburban squares; and when one of the early builders—was it Barnwell, or who was it?—started the idea of a row of palatial houses that should actually link the Old Town with the New Town, it was felt that a mighty change had set in which spelled ruin to the Old by an over-shadowing mastery of the New.

With the birth of the *Leamington Courier* began a new epoch in the history of the Spa. Almost simultaneously with its advent, Union-row

was brilliantly lighted with the then new illuminant—a tribute, probably, paid by one great illuminating power to another that was destined to be. The former planted itself in the New Town, the *Courier* drew its first breath of life in the Old. Union-row was what I afterwards knew as Union-parade, and this was the spot where gas-light first found a home at Leamington Priors in 1823. Thus the coming union between the Old Town and its assumed rival was heralded by the new luminosity, and the *Courier*, five years later, cemented that union. A new post-coach, too—the first that brought Leamington into closer union with London and shortened the journey by accelerated speed—commenced running about a month before the *Courier* was born, and was the coach that took the first number of the paper to the Metropolis. That coach was the "Eclipse." Thus the new journal was triumphantly ushered into life by a scientific product that broke the record of illuminating power, was driven around in its infancy in a coach that claimed to have brought Leamington nearer to the great Metropolis than it had ever been before, and now, healthy and vigorous, finds itself going hand-in-hand with the town towards that prosperous future which it is pledged to aid in reaching.

The first number of the *Courier* was dated August 9th, 1828; its price was sevenpence; and it was just half the size it is now. The imprint of this first number made known the fact that the paper was "printed by Sharp and Fairfax, at their general printing office in Wise-street." This general printing office in Wise-street was at the corner of the street opposite to what was then known as the Albion Hotel, now called the Great Western Hotel. Those who initiated the new literary luminant were determined that the product of their plans should have room enough in which to stretch its growing limbs. The building might have been originally intended for a chapel, or something of the kind. It was a particularly cold and cavernous-looking chamber—as a child I have sat shivering in it often through the wintry hours—and it was in this

wilderness of a building the *Courier* was born, under the auspices of Messrs. "Sharp and Fairfax." For the sake of historical lucidity, it should be explained that there were, with Mr. Fairfax, two James Sharps—James the elder and James the younger. The former was recognised as the joint founder of the paper with Mr. Fairfax, and the latter as the editor of the new venture. These three were the original triumvirate to whose initiative the *Courier* owed its birth and being. Their work involved no common task, for all the elements of the time were against them. Leamington, like a child awakening from sleep, was just opening its eyes upon the wide world, and those who planned for the future had to build their hopes, not upon what was, but upon what was to be. Strong in this prospective belief, they cast their bread—such as they had—upon the waters, and were content to wait, in the conviction that they would be gathering the golden harvest in some happier, though, perchance, far off season.

Of the two elder founders I will now speak—of the editor in a later chapter. Mr. Sharp the elder was a benevolent-looking old gentleman, eager and alert, shrewd, and full of business energy. The earlier copies of the *Courier* give his private address as "No. 4, Wise-street," but I have a very distinct recollection, in those earlier days, of seeing him sitting at his desk in the front room of a small house in a small street connecting the Lower-avenue with the street at the back of the Music Hall—I forget its name, but have a vague idea it was Orchard-street—whither, as a "printer's devil," and a very small one, too, I was being everlastingly despatched for "copy" by the overseer of the printing-house the other side of High-street. Mr. James Sharp the elder was a much older man than the joint founder of the *Courier*, Mr. John Fairfax. The former had grey hair, and stooped a little. The latter seemed to be in the meridian of life, as I remember him, firmly knit and upright, with a head of hair in which no trace appeared to denote advancing age.

Mr. Fairfax's connection with the paper was of

short duration. The difference between the parties was of political faith – two out of three being distinctly Conservative, and the third Liberal. It was always a mystery how such antagonistic elements could have gravitated towards each other in the first instance. In number 18 of the *Courier*, therefore – December 6th, 1828 – readers were not surprised to see Mr. Fairfax's name omitted from the imprint, and the announcement made that the paper was "Printed and published by James Sharp, the proprietor and editor." It was not then made clear – nor was it ever made clear—which of the Jameses was the proprietor and which the editor, and the only existing official record we have that there were really two is to be found in the fact that the official copy of the paper, required in those days to be sent to Somerset House for purposes of revenue, was sometimes signed "James Sharp, senior," and at other times "James Sharp, junior," and occasionally by both, as proprietor or proprietors. It bore the dual signature for the first time on the 21st of November, 1829. I scarcely remember hearing whether Mr. Fairfax was, or was not, in business before he joined Mr. Sharp and his son, but shortly after he left them he announced himself as being in business as a printer, bookseller, and stationer, at 37, Bath-street. He had previously been in business at 10, Gloucester-street. Before then he was in Clemens-street, his shop being at the corner of West-street. The former name of that street was Printer-street, so named after Mr. Fairfax's printing establishment. I am inclined to think it was while he was in Clemens-street that he joined the Sharps. I very well remember buying my earliest school-books at his place in Bath-street, and have a distinct recollection of Mr. Fairfax himself behind his own counter, for I frequently saw him there. He was a busy man, and never seemed happier than when at work.

Some six years after the *Courier* started, a paper came out called the *Leamington Press*, printed, as the imprint stated, "by William Hatfield," and "published at Mr. Ebenezer Crick's, No. 1, Gloucester-street, Leamington

Priors." This Mr. Hatfield died shortly afterwards, and on April 2nd, 1855, an announcement appeared in the *Press* that "this journal will appear next week under new management, and will be printed and published by Mr. Fairfax, printer and publisher, in Bath-street, under a new title." The following week the paper came out, and the new title was *The Leamington Chronicle and Warwickshire Reporter*, being "printed and published by Mr. John Fairfax and co-proprietors, at 37, Bath-street." A copy of that particular number lies before me as I write, and in the margin at the top is the signature and official description, written by himself—"John Fairfax, printer, Leamington Priors"—in a clear flowing style of caligraphy, that represents, as plainly as the graphiological art can represent, the transparent honesty of the writer, and the lucid characteristics of his literary power as it became afterwards more pronounced in him as a citizen of another hemisphere.

Six months later the imprint of the *Chronicle* bore Mr Fairfax's name alone as the "proprietor," and it thus continued till June 21st, 1838—10 years after he helped to found the *Courier*—when the name appeared for the last time, and was replaced the following week by that of "John Merridew, bookseller, 27, Parade,' as "printer and publisher." Mr. Fairfax shortly afterwards went to Australia. Some 15 years later he re-visited the old place, and I remember his being then announced to deliver a lecture at Warwick on his Australian experiences, his sister, I think, being the wife of the Postmaster there at that time. The lecturer was described in the printed bills as "Editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*," and he died the proprietor of that paper—a wealthy man.

I know of no more striking, and, at the same time, no more pathetic figure, in the earlier annals of Leamington, than that of John Fairfax. He came of a good old Puritanic stock—brave of heart, of sound and robust intelligence, transparently honest, and unswerving in obedience to a high moral principle that placed him at a disadvantage among the pettier struggles in the

midst of which his local lot was cast. He wanted a broader, freer atmosphere—a bolder and more ambitious flight—in the interest of the commonwealth he loved so well. The shadows then came—gloomy, gaunt, and cruel—that would have broken a less dauntless heart than his; and, setting his face bravely towards the brighter and wider possibilities of the new world, he earned fame and fortune at a time of life when others are thinking only of tranquility and rest. And this was all done, too, in the face of a sea of difficulties, with which he bravely wrestled till the tide turned and bore him on to prosperity. Still later, like another well-known historic character, it was vouchsafed to this of our early Leamington pioneers to close his eyes placidly in the last sleep, with the words *ad sum* in his thoughts if not upon his lips.

CHAPTER II.

For Auld Lang Syne—The Lucky Lane—A Portrait—Striking Ile in Water—Our Village in Embryo—A Rural Paradise—Eventide and Dawn.

I HAVE often tried to realise what Leamington was like when, on that eventful 14th of January, in the year of grace one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four, a certain Ben Satchwell and his boon companion, Will Abbotts, took that historic walk of theirs, in the early morning, along a narrow lane which seemed muddy enough to them, but which, as things have turned out, may justly be said to have been paved with nuggets of gold. Benjamin had succeeded his father as the occupant of the old mill yonder, and William Abbotts was landlord of the village inn that gloried in the sportsmanlike appellation of "The Dog" There was, it is true, another inn called the Bowling Green, but this was the more aristocratic home of a better class of people who came in search of health and found it. Yes—found it! Found it in that poor little thin streak of water you see there, trickling out from the bank by the roadside through a piece of clay pipe, and emptying itself into the ditch. We may take it, therefore, that "The Dog" represented the democratic element of the hundred or more rustics who inhabited the score or two of picturesque little cottages on the southern bank of the Leam, which made up the aboriginal village we now know as Royal Leamington Spa.

Of the two cronies who thus walked and talked in that narrow green lane, William Abbotts was the youngest. He was 48 years of age, and his companion was three years older. Benjamin

was a native—and gloried in it. Master Abbotts was an outsider. He was born at Long Itchington, and his uncle, who lived at Birdingbury, was keeper of the woods belonging to Sir Theophilus Biddulph. William turned innkeeper as mine host of "The Dog," when his uncle left him a bit of property on the side of the narrow green lane opposite to where the spring ran through the clay piping into the ditch. In front of this bit of property was the village pond, where ducks had their diversions, and where the pack-horse was wont to stop and refresh himself as he passed along the lane towards the narrow timber bridge crossing the river What Master Abbotts was like I cannot say, but a portrait of Benjamin the miller lies before me as I write, "drawn," as the publisher of it says, "from a sketch taken from the life by Miss Fox, one of the first and most zealous promoters of the Spa Charity, of which honest Benjamin was the founder." There is the contour of a nose that might have helped to make up the facial expression of a Napoleon, protruding lips denoting plodding strength of will, a dimpling spirit of sarcasm playing unpleasantly about those lips, the sleek double chin indicative of a contented mind, and plenty of curly hair that bespeaks the sentimental turn. That he is drawn in his shirt-sleeves emphasises Benjamin's industrial tendency, while the trick he evidently had of wearing his billycock hat pulled well over his eyes may be taken as emblematic of native shrewdness, which suggests the diplomatic wisdom of being able to look out upon the world without being looked into in return. That William was of a jovial vein may be gathered from the fact that he is sketched with a "churchwarden" in one hand, while the other is engaged fumbling in his waistcoat pocket apparently in search of the tobacco with which to fill it. Literary and studious? Of course he is! Don't you see he has Dugdale on his knee, over which he ponders in interested serenity? And if there were any further doubt about it, the old-fashioned little inkstand, the quill pens sticking upright in it, and the roll of paper beside it on the three-legged table by his side, would dispel that doubt.

It is an antique rush-bottom chair on which the philosopher sits, and all you have to do is to swathe his very substantial-looking legs with stout worsted hose, garter his loose breeches at the knee, put his well-developed feet into roomy shoes that may be garnished with good honest buckles, let him wear what appears in his portrait to be a leathern apron—worn, no doubt, in shoemaking moments when not engaged at the mill—and you have dear old Benjamin Satchwell, the corner-stone and foundation of all our local greatness and prosperity.

They stood by the side of the fishpond, did Will and Ben. "There be some sort of a spring *there*," said Benjamin, sagely nodding his head in the direction of the middle of the pool, "but they say it be fresh water, and what *we* want is another like that over there," pointing with his thumb over the left shoulder. Benjamin puffed his morning pipe, and gazed abstractedly at a particular spot where the water bubbled up clear in the turbid waste. "What does Fuller say?" asked Benjamin. "Fuller says, that at Leamington, two miles from Warwick, there issueth out of the womb of the earth, within a stride of each other, two twin springs—the one salt, the other fresh!" Still pondered the two village worthies. "Ah," said William, "I've heerd you say, Master Satchwell, as how that was wrote more than a hundred years ago, but did nobody never *taste* the water, to see if it *was* fresh?" "Never heerd of nobody as did!" replied Ben. "Then s'pose we try it!" suggested William; and they both simultaneously scooped up some of the water in their hands and drank of it. "Brackish!" said Benjamin critically, "and saltish!" Master Abbotts offered no suggestion, but disappearing, he returned in a few minutes with a pewter measure. This he hooked on to the end of a walking-stick and dropped it gently in at the spot where the spring bubbled up. They both tasted the water thus obtained in its purer state. "Saline, by Jove!" exclaimed Satchwell, who was the first to taste it. "So it is, by Jingo!" re-echoed Master Abbotts Eureka! They had discovered the long-hidden secret—and then they went home to breakfast.

And what was this village of Leamington Priors like at this crisis in its history? Chronicles tell us that, as far as its healing waters were concerned, there were "no greater conveniences for bathing than a tub placed in the ditch into which the spring trickled from the red clay piping above." In this tub one Dawkes the Dipper used to souse his patients, who found, some at the Bowling Green Inn, others at the Dog, and a few at the rustic little cottages scattered about, such home comforts as were going. At the present time (1894) Dawkes's grandson, William, is a member of the Leamington Town Council. The Bowling Green Inn stood on the Warwick high-road, at the south-east corner of what is now Church-street, and a cluster of thatched cottages, timbered, quaint, and picturesque, slumbered in the shadow of a tiny church as old, as quaint, and as picturesque as themselves The cottages had their gardens and apple-orchards, in which they had slept through the centuries, and the church lay at peace embosomed in the protecting arms of several magnificent elms of age unknown. Scarcely a stone's throw from the lych-gate stood a cottage near a footpath leading across a meadow to the mill. This was were Benjamin Satchwell lived, where he started the first post office in the village, where his widow and daughter lived after him—I perfectly well remember his daughter as Mrs Hopton—and probably where they all died. Opposite the Bowling Green Inn stood two or three little thatched cottages as picturesque as the rest, and all in front of them were open fields, with here and there a detached cottage or two that gave variety to the scene. A few yards up the highway leading towards Warwick, lying back embosomed in trees, was the Manor House, approached from the high road by a semicircular carriage-drive fringed on each side with stately elms that formed an umbrageous crescent at once striking and artistically beautiful. This very picturesque drive was known in after years as the Upper-avenue and Lower-avenue. The upper part of the leafy

semi-circle began at the present entrance to the railway bridge from the Old Warwick-road, and the lower part immediately opposite the entrance to the Tachbrook-road, the Manor House forming the crown of the graceful and picturesque arch.

Such was Leamington, when Master Abbotts and Benjamin Satchwell stood watching the bubbles in the village fishpond on that eventful morning. All round, at that time, in the upper reaches beyond the river to the north, were fields of rich meadow land, with undulating scenery of surprising loveliness, a bravely-wooded expanse, and a sweet soft air made musical all day long by the singing of birds. The chief entrance to the village from the north was by the mill—"down a green lane from Holly-walk," as a chronicler describes it, "across the flood-gates at the mill, and along another green lane to the village." The little parish church, at the head of God's acre, would then appear to your right. And a tiny structure it looked—crumbling with age, squab and square of build, of ecclesiastical monkish aspect, having the appearance of an infant abbey of the olden time that had somehow or other got stunted in its growth. It is eventide now. See how the western sun, red with its dying light, brings the quaint old architectural gem into bolder relief, and lights up the glittering weather-vane that surmounts it like a crown of glory. On the southern side of this baby-abbey an ancient sun-dial tells the silent story of the hours, and clustering below—seen in a warmer light now—are that same group of thatched cottages, as old-world and worn as the church at whose feet they have nestled for untold years. The shadows deepen around the village, the broad expanse of green is aflush with the crimson sunset. Deeper and still deeper grow the shadows, till the village droops drowsily into silence. It is the eventide of a long slumbering Past. Master Abbotts and the miller will now hie them to the Dog, where they will talk over the enthralling event of the day—and when the sun comes round again, and they have slept over their

luck, they will feel the full importance of yesterday's work. They will see in it the dawn of a dazzling Future And who, then, shall be masters of the situation, but Benjamin Satchwell, William Abbotts, and Dawkes the Dipper.

CHAPTER III.

A Good Old Hostelry—The Shadow of a Coming Man—And of a Coming Town—High Jinks at the Bowling Green—A Rare Old Time—Our Postmaster-General.

THE official visit to Leamington, paid by the Earl of Aylesford as Lord of the Manor in 1803, was another landmark in the annals of the rural Spa. This was 19 years after that particular January morning, when Ben Satchwell and Will Abbotts had their memorable walk along the green lane, and, like the rustic oracles of old, read the future of Leamington in the turbid waters of a village fish-pond! Guided by the prophetic bubbles, Abbotts had gone delving for a second saline spring he could call his own, and had found it—he had run up a couple of temporary baths on the spot—and had built him a small house hard by for the refreshment of man and horse, calling it the New Inn. That New Inn is now the good old Bath Hotel of immortal memory. What a crowd of pleasant recollections cluster about that hospitable old hostelry, to be sure! But wait! 19 years have passed away since that historic morning pipe, and before I go in for pleasant memories, I want to see what the old pioneers of Leamington have been doing for themselves and for others during that time. One of them had gone delving, as Will Abbotts of Long Itchington had done, and had chanced on a spring of saline water, round and about which also baths were speedily erected. That spring may be seen to-day running out, *pro bono publico*, from a marble font under a railway arch at the south-western corner of Bath-street. In 1803 it was called Wise's Well, or the

Road Well. It is now everybody's well. So Abbotts and the people at the Road Well plied their avocation merrily, for Leamington fame had spread, and grist came rolling in. But what about the poor little streak of water that trickled 19 years before through the clay piping into a tub in the ditch? Well, it trickled there still. The ditch was there—and the tub was there—and Dawkes the Dipper was there, too, ready to souse his hydrophobic friends in it to their heart's content. But the chroniclers tells us "there was a slush-pool near the spring, and the place was disgustingly dirty." This was bad, so the village pioneers were looking forward to the visit of the Earl of Aylesford, as Lord of the Manor, to alter all this.

The chroniclers of the time tells us, among other things of a more or less vague and visionary character, that "Sinker's appeared very highly to have attracted the attention of the Earl of Aylesford," when his lordship made his famous visit to the rustic Spa in 1803. Sinker's was a small roadside inn, standing just opposite the Bowling Green Inn, and it took its name from the person who occupied it, who cultivated the habit of calling it "Sinker's boarding-house." But the historic fact was, that Sinker's boarding-house was originally the "Dog," which had been occupied by William Abbotts from the time he first came to the village, about 1776, till the year 1793, when he removed to a house he had built for himself, called the New Inn (now the Bath Hotel), and let the "Dog" to Mr. Sinker, who dropped its title, re-christened it "Sinker's boarding-house,' and was in possession when it "attracted the attention of the Lord of the Manor, in view," as the historian says, "of projected improvements and better hotel accommodation for the many visitors who are beginning to flock to this rural Spa." Ah, yes! The man who was destined to work out these improvements, which, in 1803, the village pioneers were strongly recommending the Lord of the Manor to make, had not yet found his way to Leamington. He was then in London, at the head of one of the chief hotels in High Holborn.

He afterwards went to Cheltenham to manage an hotel there, and it was not till 10 years had elapsed that he assumed the *role* of one of the most robust of our local pioneers who eventually led Leamington on to prosperity. Locating himself at the still rural Spa in 1813, he, too, like the Earl of Aylesford before him, had his attention drawn to Sinker's, as well as to a boarding-house adjoining called the Oxford, that had been recently opened by one Fisher. These the coming man entered upon, working the two in combination as the Oxford Boarding-house till 1826. On the 13th of May in that year his little daughter laid the foundation-stone of a palatial hotel, that was to emulate, if not surpass, the elaborate characteristics of the great Metropolitan hotels, and be an ornament to the Royal Spa. The man who did this was Michael Copps, and the palace he built was the Royal Hotel, of which more in its proper chronological place.

Well, then, in 1803, the Earl of Aylesford visited the rural Spa. There was no bridge yet spanning the Leam where the present structure exists, except the wooden foot-bridge to which I have already referred. The first stone bridge was not begun till 1807, and was completed in 1809. No New Town existed in 1803. The first brick of the first house in the New Town was laid on the 8th of October, 1808, by one George Stanley, a mason living at Warwick, under the direction of one Mr. Frost, the owner of the building: and the particular house of which the brick was the forerunner of the coming New Town was said by the chronicler of the time to be "opposite the Assembly Rooms." There seems to be a difference of opinion as to which house has a right to claim the honour of being the first in the New Town, and who it was that laid the first stone or brick. The above statement as to a Warwick mason laying the first brick was copied from a Warwick paper some years later. One of the early guides gives the "Golden Lion, Regent-street," as the first house in the New Town. I have no doubt it was the first public-house, but it was not the first house. Mr. William Dawkes,

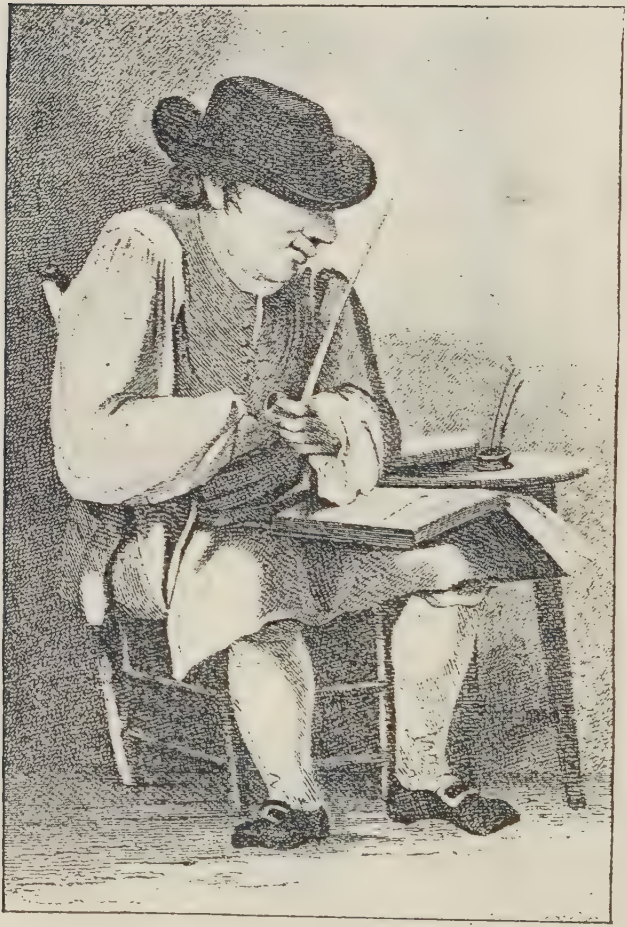
to whom I have referred as being the grandson of the original Dipper at the Spa, writes on the subject as follows, under date May 2, 1894:—"I have always understood from my father, who was present, that the first house in the New Town was the house next to Lloyds' Bank, and in my father's old record it is put thus: 'New Leamington. The first stone of New Leamington was laid on Tuesday, the 20th day of September, in the year 1808. The first stone was laid by John Tomes, Esq., the second by the Rev. James Wallhouse, the third by Mr. Benjamin Satchwell, and the bells were set ringing on the occasion.' The ringers had £1 6s. given them for ringing." The balance of testimony would seem to go in favour of the house next but one to Lloyd's Bank, being the first erected in the New Town, and while three of the Leamington pioneers can claim to have laid a stone each, the honour of laying the first brick may well be awarded to George Stanley, the Warwick stonemason. Mr. Barnwell, a Leamington builder, has the credit of having erected the house referred to, next to the Bank. It may be interesting to know that what is now called Regent-street was first named Cross-street, that section to the west being Upper, and that to the east Lower Cross-street. The Regent Hotel had yet to come.

The chroniclers were now beginning to tell of the exceptional beauties of the Spa. "The villa of Mr. Wise at the entrance of the village from Warwick," says one of them, "and that of Mr Willes at the other extremity, with their respective domains, together with the great variety of neat cottages and opulent farms, would attract the notice and engage the admiration of the passenger, independent of anything else." The so-called "villa" of Mr. Wise was the Manor House (in after years known as the Manor House Hotel, kept by Mr. Curtis, formerly of the now extinct baths in High-street); and that of Mr. Willes was Newbold Comyn. There were now higher jinks than ever at the old Bowling Green; Sinker's was in full fling during the season; the New Inn had its patrons;

The Old Post Office

and Dawkes the dipper soused his patients more briskly than he had ever done before in the tub that stood in the ditch over the way. The Bowling Green was the great centre of fashionable life in those days. Here was the Assembly Room—a small apartment with a real boarded floor for dancing on—the first and for a long time the only boarded floor in Leamington! The house was kept going by subscription, and people flocked thither and enjoyed themselves when the country-side was in its freshest and sweetest mood. "At the Bowling Green Inn," says a chronicler of this interesting time, "the neighbouring gentry, attracted by the sylvan loveliness of the Spa, dine together every Tuesday from May-day to Michaelmas, holding a grand feast and festival in the Whitsuntide week, when all the subscribers walk in the forenoon, in solemn procession, to the church. Here an appropriate sermon is preached, after which the day is finished with an exhibition of various rural sports on a stage erected on the Green at the south-east corner of the inn." Sweetly-quaint old chronicle of a sweetly-quaint old time! Here might have been seen the courtly Duke of Bedford walking statelily through a minuet with the Honourable Mrs. Leigh of Stoneleigh Abbey, or the Duchess of Gordon giving the tips of her fingers to the Earl of Aylesford for a similar terpsichorean evolution, finishing up all round with the romp of Sir Roger de Coverley in good old English fashion. They were merry times were those in that same year of 1803, when the Lord of the Manor paid his official visit to the rural, but now rapidly-rising Spa, to see what could be done for it. Benjamin Satchwell had been doing his best all through the intervening years between the morning pipe and the manorial visit. Among other things he had organised a regular postal service, long before the village became a post-town—he would soon have been postmaster-general if circumstances had favoured him—and his little cottage near the mill was a veritable St. Martin's-le-Grand in miniature, where he was his own postmaster, receiver, sorter, carrier, despatch-clerk, enquiry-clerk, and all the rest of it. What

a character he must have been, to be sure—this dear old Benjamin of ours! Two years later he was over head and ears in anxiety, starting the Leamington Spa Charity, instituted for the gratuitous relief of invalids—a praiseworthy movement inaugurated by a philanthropic heart. It has always seemed to me that while the speculative mania prevailed around him as the natural outcome of the new state of things, honest Benjamin kept his love for his native village unselfish and pure, and was guided in all he did by a true and honourable philanthropic spirit, loyal to himself and to the rural home he loved so well. "During his life-time," says a chronicler, "it was amongst the great and constant delights of his heart to write a correct statement of accounts, disbursements, and cases, in connection with the Spa Charity, of which he was the founder, the treasurer, and the secretary." Here, in this humble villager's philanthropy, we see the germ, growing and growing afterwards with the years, of that greater philanthropic and humanitarian institution the Warneford Hospital —the full and perfect flower grown from the seedling which Benjamin Satchwell planted 90 years ago. The good old man had not long passed to his rest when life began with me, and as a child I heard, as it were, the echo of his retreating footsteps in the recital of his goodness, orally transmitted by those who knew and loved him. The conviction then formed has become crystallised with the passing years, and looking back I feel that in this early village pioneer Leamington had its truest and most unselfish friend.



BEN SATCHWELL.

CHAPTER IV.

The Dog Inn—Ben Satchwell at Home—The Village Shakespeare—Side-splitting Diversions—The Pond and the Pennies—The Holy Well—A Sequestered Nook.

THE Dog Inn must have been a curious little structure when William Abbotts first took possession of it somewhere about the year 1776, nearly 120 years ago. It was originally a small thatched alehouse, standing alone by the roadside, with a good-sized garden and apple orchard in the rear; in front, a flower garden, reaching to the gravelled footpath; a hedge and ditch on the right hand, leading continuously up the Warwick-road to the west, and a hedge and ditch on the left hand, leading continuously to the east towards Radford — continuously with the exception of gates and stiles, leading over fields to the villages of Tachbrook and Whitnash, lying to the south. This little old-fashioned roadside alehouse was situated some 40 or 50 paces from the north-east corner of what is now Clemens-street, leading towards Radford, with a lattice on each side of a low-pitched door, and two small casements above, indicating a tiny dormitory to each. I perfectly well remember the old house still standing, in my early recollection of the spot, though it had, by then, been nearly improved out of existence by modern changes, to which I shall refer in chronological order as those changes came about.

When I was a boy, I had the good fortune to be a near neighbour of Benjamin Satchwell's daughter, Mrs. Hopton, who was then living, and had lived, as far back as I can remember anything, in the cottage at the top of Mill-street (now Burman's), formerly used as the village Post-office, when Satchwell was Postmaster there in the olden time. In the year 1841, I was bound

apprentice to a Leamington printer, who was then engaged printing a work, entitled "The History of Leamington Priors from the earliest records to the year 1842," by Richard Hopper, and dedicated to Dr. Henry Jephson.* On that work I made my first serious essay in the art and mystery of typography, under the kindly tutelage of one Thomas Warner, who, when he left Leamington soon after, took up an engagement at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, where he remained for many years, and may be there now. With the progress of this history of Leamington there came the natural craving to know all about the past history of a town that was then growing, and had for some years being growing, by leaps and bounds. I used frequently to pay neighbourly visits to Mrs. Hopton, with whom, as a boy, I was a bit of a favourite, taking with me, clandestinely, of course, proofs of the work in progress to show her, seeing that she took so much interest in it. On these occasions, she was wont to be particularly communicative as to the state of things as they existed at Leamington as far back as she could remember, and would also describe, with wonderful minuteness, what had from time to time been spoken of by her father, whose remarkable memory took him back to a very early date in the history of the village. On the south front of the cottage, I remember, there was a particularly fine apple-tree, the branches of which spread over the little thatched dwelling, embowering it completely, so that anyone sitting at the upper lattice might open it and pluck the fruit. That tree, I have heard Mrs. Hopton say, was planted by her father, and in one of the early guides, published in 1814, the tree will be found depicted as a very small stripling. Hopper's history was enriched, too, I remember, with historical information given by Mrs. Potterton, a daughter of William Abbotts. This lady died while the printing of the history was in progress, but before her death several letters came under my notice, written by her, or for her, explanatory of our local topography in the early days of her father's efforts in connection with the village and its mineral waters, notes

* See Appendix (*a*).

being superadded as to what had been orally transmitted to her as the earliest recollections of her father when he came permanently to reside at the Spa. From these and other equally authentic sources was my early topographical knowledge obtained, and I am thus enabled to give, with tolerable accuracy, an outline of the Dog Inn as it appeared in Satchwell's early days, together with exact descriptions of other historic landmarks of the ancient village—landmarks that have long since been swept away, but which must never be forgotten.

The Dog was the village alehouse in which Ben Satchwell used to hold high court as the oracular authority on all local questions. Here, of an evening, in a cosy chimney-corner of the quaint little kitchen, Benjamin would sit, puffing a cloud of smoke from behind a yard of clay, and moistening its dryness from a can of Will Abbotts's best home-brewed ale. Benjamin would invariably appear in his shirt-sleeves, wearing his leathern apron, as he wore it at his shoemaking stall at home, and thus humbly appareled he would sit a veritable King of the village, his Crown a plaited straw hat, which he never doffed but to visitors—Ben had the utmost veneration for visitors—his sceptre a tobacco-pipe, and his subjects villagers as subservient as any autocrat could wish them to be. Ben was the village Shakespeare, too, and wrote sonnets—not to his lady's eyebrows, but to those of other lady visitors who from time to time flashed like meteors athwart his humble vision.

At the time Abbotts entered upon the Dog, Satchwell was thus the stay and prop of the humble little inn as its most influential frequenter. Ben's object in going is thus explained in rhyme by himself:

> "Some to the Dog do go to drink,
> But I go there to smoke and think;
> To hear folks tell, o'er cup of ale,
> How Leamington doth wag its tail."

Village gossip was no doubt the staple trade at the Dog, and I am inclined to think that no frequenter of the humble hostelry would be likely to draw more intelligent conclusions from

the recital as to the wagging of Leamington's tail than Benjamin. It would be his barometer, and from its readings would his course be shaped. His father would probably have the management of the old mill at the time these waggings went on, and Ben might have been looking forward to a possible reversion of that occupation as one more congenial to his tastes than that of the village cordwainer. When Abbotts came, Ben would be 44 years of age. William Abbotts was four years younger. I can well understand that William and Benjamin would soon find out how they could make themselves useful to each other. Abbotts was evidently of an enterprising, speculative turn of mind, and saw clearly the possibilities of the future. Ben Satchwell possessed the faculty of quickening those possibilities with his pen. He was the recognised local correspondent of one of the Coventry papers, whose editor printed his effusions, poetic and otherwise; and thus the interests of the two early pioneers of the Spa ran together.

One who knew Satchwell* well in his later years says he was "a very ingenious, persevering, spirited man, and in a different sphere of life might have founded a kingdom elsewhere, as he founded a village here. He was completely the Leamington oracle, settling all disputes and grevances. He was, too, a poet withal, and frequently exercised his talents in praise of the waters and in eulogising persons of distinction that visited the Spa, upon whom he regularly waited, on their arrival, with a specimen of his muse. As its patron and benefactor, he kept annals, in verse, of the rise and progress of the Spa, and published numerous notices of it. These, with cases of cures performed by the waters at the old well, he collected into books, which he let out, at a certain sum per week, to the visitors of the village, to whom their eccentricity proved very amusing. He likewise contributed, by verbal praise when waiting on the visitors at their first arrival, to spread the fame of the place."

Here we have the character of honest Benjamin clearly defined. With a literary taste constantly struggling for expression in the darkness

* See Appendix (*b*).

engendered by the want of education, he was found as constantly devoting such innate ability as he possessed to the development and future welfare of his native village. The difference between Satchwell's character and that of Abbotts was clearly marked, and Benjamin himself unconsciously supplies the key to both, in some lines he wrote, copied from a manuscript said to have been in the possession of Mr. Francis Smith, of Southam, entitled "Escrite on Mr. Abbotts's speculation at Leamington," as follows:—

If Master Abbotts had not done
His baths of laud and praise,
It must have been poor Leamington
Now as in former days.

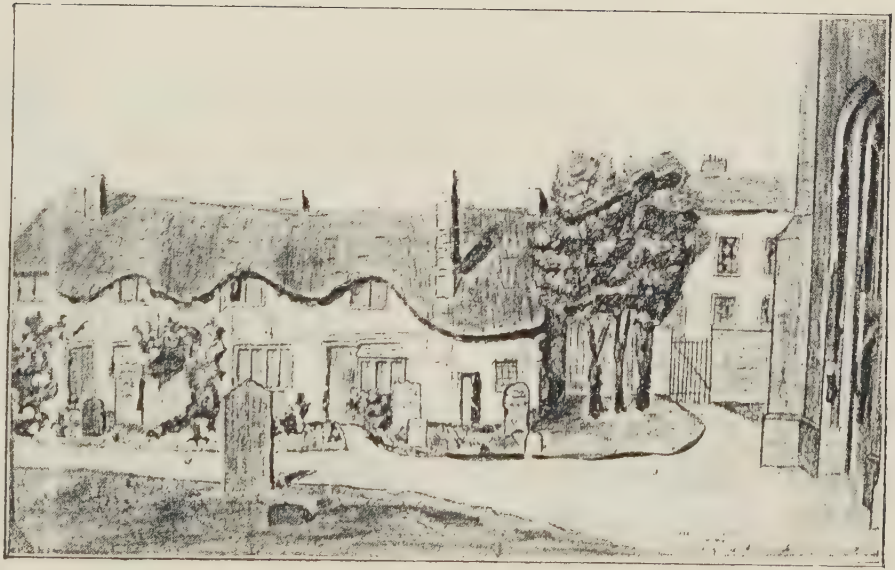
Perhaps so. But after Master Abbotts had "done his baths of laud and praise," there was something more wanting to complete the logical mechanism. Satchwell was too large-hearted in helping others to think of his own share in the good work, and self-praise was never a weakness of his. If any local rhymester of his time, however, had supplemented his own generous quatrain by the following, he would have made the situation logical and told the truth:—

Had honest Ben ne'er plied his pen
To spread our village fame about,
It would have been poor Leamington,
A village still, without a doubt.

Abbotts had the enterprising speculative mind. He had long been at work searching and sinking wells for mineral water at Leamington, before it was discovered by accident in a fishpond. When he found it he put up a couple of primitive baths, and this was the "speculation" to which Satchwell refers in the lines I have quoted. The Mr. F. Smith, of whom mention is made, was, I presume, the printer at Southam who published a guide to Leamington in 1826, and was probably the Smith named as the husband of one of William Abbotts's daughters. If so, the lines being in his possession would imply that the humble author of them had either sent them to his friend Will as an unusually brilliant specimen of his poetic powers, or had handed them to him

through a cloud of tobacco-smoke in the cosy chimney corner at the Dog, which Benjamin looked upon as his own. In all probability the whole "Escrite on Mr. Abbotts's speculation at Leamington" was recited from that chimney corner over and over again, for the edification of those in the village who took any interest at all in this product of the muses.

When Abbotts took to the Dog, then, it was as I have described it. Immediately in front of the cottage was the village horse-pond, which must have been of considerable antiquity, for one of the earlier historians speaks of it as having been there from time immemorial, and adds that "one of the chief diversions at the Whitsuntide festival at this favoured village is for the visitors to toss pence into the pond for those of the villagers who may be lucky enough to get them; while others, by the promise of reward, do egg on the youths of the village to try conclusions which of them may first throw his opponent into the water, which is generally accomplished head formost, to the sore discomfiture of the vanquised, the delight of the victor, and the unstinted amusement of the spectators." On the north side of the pond were three thatched cottages. In 1796 one of them was occupied by a very early trader, one Mrs. Leeson, straw and leghorn hat manufacturer, and 30 years later by Miss Meredith, carrying on the same business. Another of the three cottages was occupied in 1829 by Mrs. Barron, who carried on the business of tinworker and brazier, and her name appears as such in the guide of 1830, the only other tinworker and brazier recorded as being in the town at that time in business being Mr. John Minson, 49, Clemens-street, but in a guide of 1833, Mr. John Grove, 4, Regent-street, was added to the list. In front of these cottages were posts and chains that had served in the past as a sort of protection from the village pond that lay in front. This pond was filled up in 1813 by Mr. Copps, when he took possession of the Dog, with other buildings, which by that time, had been added to it, the old Dog Inn, as it originally stood, being immediately opposite these three



THE COTTAGES AT THE WEST OF THE PARISH CHURCH.

cottages, on the other side of the High-street. I have some recollection of Mr. Trepass, a hair-dresser, living in one of the cottages.

On the north side of the highway, a little to the left as you stood at the door of the Dog, was the public bowling-green, with the little inn of that name at the south-east corner. The small Assembly Room attached to the inn was called the Green Room and opened on to the green. From the front of the inn, at the south corner, to what is now Bath-street, and thence at right angles along that roadway northward to what is now known as Regent-place, was a row of stately and magnificent elm trees, in the leafy shade of which the inn and its bowling-green nestled in the very perfection of rustic beauty and attractiveness. These trees were not removed till 1825. In 1776 a wayside hedge and ditch of the good old English pattern, known the wide-world over, ran along both sides of Bath-street (then a lovely green lane), as far as what is now known as Church-walk. Here was an opening leading to the village church, through a small rustic gate, and this gate led also to the original mineral spring, which for centuries had trickled on the other side of the bank into the ditch of an adjoin-field that sloped down to the river. The approach to the spring was in those days from the church-yard, the hedge on the western side shutting it off from the lane leading over the wooden bridge that spanned the Leam. Within half-a-dozen yards of the well, or spring, were four small thatched cottages, the first of which was as near to the church door as the fourth was to the spring. At the back of these were two or three more wattled cots, and at the side nearest the lane was another. This cluster of rustic antiquity stood in an apple orchard, and the green meadows at the back sloped gently down to the river, a footpath running from the west entrance to the church across to the mill. In one of the cottages, when the Holy Well, as the spring was then called, was beginning to gain repute for some really extraordinary cures, and particularly of hydrophobia, by dipping, lived the chief dipper, and in the other an assistant dipper, who

had to be called in whenever the chief had in hand a hydrophobic case more violent than usual. "Of the persons thus cured of that dreadful disorder," says a chronicler of the time, "an annual register was kept, attested by the dipper on oath. From these registers it appears that, from June, 1778, to 1786, eight years, no fewer than 119 persons who had suffered from the bite of mad dogs had been effectually cured by immersion in the water." Later still, so marvellous were the cures, that an official dipper was engaged. His name was Thomas Dawkes, and he is said to have been "so jealous of the reputation of the water, that he declared, if ever he should meet with a failure, he would not dip anyone again."

The Holy Well, in those early days, was thus situated in a sequestered, romantic nook, at the west corner of the churchyard, and within a few paces of the church porch itself. It trickled from a bank where primroses and violets grew in season, and was surrounded by buttercups and daisies in a meadow spreading out before it like a beautiful carpet. On the opposite side of the lane was also a hedge and ditch running from the river to the high-road leading to Warwick, with here and there a stately elm throwing its dreamy shadow athwart the meadows. The only structure between the bridge and the highway was an outbuilding standing where the Bath Hotel now stands, the building and the freehold on which it stood being the property of William Abbotts, bequeathed to him by his uncle. Wise's baths—afterwards Curtis's—at the end of the lane to the south, were not built till 1790, and, after they were erected, they stood almost alone for 18 or 20 years. Some idea may thus be formed of the appearance which Leamington Priors presented when William Abbotts took possession of the Dog Inn about the year 1776.

CHAPTER V.

Our First Public Baths—The Power of the Press—Our Club and its Founder—A Date and a Mystery—Muddled Chronology—Neglected Genius—

For eight or ten years after Abbotts entered into possession of the Dog Inn, the only public bath in Leamington was a large tub placed in the ditch near the Holy Well. There was, of course, accommodation for dipping at the Bowling Green for those who chose to avail themselves of it, but the dip was not held to be so efficacious unless made in water cold and fresh from the bowels of the earth. Hence the demand for open-air bathing, or tubbing, at the spring. The primitive bath in use there has been described to me as an oval tub belonging to the village pig-killer, who lived in one of the tumble-down cottages that clustered around the church porch, the tub itself being common to the villagers in which to scald their dead porkers. The charge for the use of it for this purpose was one penny, and the same amount was paid as tub-tribute every time it was used as a bath by a visitor. To secure the necessary privacy at the spring, a clothes-horse, with a blanket thrown over it, did duty as a screen near the tub in which the morning plunge was made, and one of the necessary hygienic canons of the bath was that after the dip the bather should be dried by the sun and external air. Invalids too weakly for out-door bathing had to content themselves with their tub in one or other of the cottages, and should a second application for the tub be made while it was in use, the applicant would stroll about the fields till his bath was ready for him. He would be made acquainted with the fact that the tub was at his service, by a coloured handkerchief being hoisted on a bean-stick, in order that he might see the signal from

a distance and hurry up. This was the only method of bathing at Leamington before Satchwell and Abbotts discovered a second spring, the Holy Well, or original spring, being the only one known till 1784.

Two years after Abbotts came to the Dog, he changed the aspect of the inn, by substituting for lattice and thatch two smart bow windows and tile roofing, cutting down the hedge in front and clearing away the little garden, defining the frontage by placing three posts with loop-chains before each window. The same year (1778), Satchwell started a benefit club at the modernised hostelry. These were the first tangible steps towards improvement in the early history of the Spa, and in it we find the speculative idea going hand-in-hand with the philanthropic — Will Abbotts taking the lead in the former, and Ben Satchwell at the head of affairs in regard to the latter. The modernised Dog now began to regard itself as the natural competitor of the more aristocratic Bowling Green, and bid bravely for the favours of the growing number of visitors who frequented the village, while Ben plied his humble pen with more vigour than ever, with the view of bringing the rising Spa into public notice afar off. In the meantime, as is known in history, Abbotts had put up two baths on the spot where the second spring was discovered—one hot and the other cold—and these were opened with prophetic jubilation, and a lively poem from the village Shakespeare, in June, 1786. On January, 14th, two years later, we find Satchwell, "Our special correspondent," writing to his paper, at Coventry, as follows:—"We can with pleasure say that many persons of distinction have already graced our salt baths this summer. Such numerous genteel visitors, with carriages, daily resort to this place, that in a short time it must wear off the aspect of a country village. On Monday last our said baths were honoured with a truly patroness visitor from Stoneleigh Abbey, the Honourable Mrs. Leigh, who expressed great satisfaction at the super-naturality of the water and the great convenience." An artful stroke was that on the part of honest Benjamin,

giving a super-natural direction to the qualities of the healing spring! Perhaps he believed it. Perhaps the Honourable Mrs. Leigh believed it. I think they both might have done so, for the Holy Well was close to the church door, and the little wattled cottages hard by had the credit, even then, of being originally intended as lazar-houses, in which to receive the suffering and infirm who were brought to the spot by their friends, in order to get miraculously cured of their afflictions, at a time when the Priory was a religious house. The local tradition was, that the monks, or hospitallers, at the Priory in the olden times, were famed for their miraculous cures of the sick by immersion at the spring, the effects of which were regarded as supernatural. Small mud huts were, it was thought, erected close to the spring by the monks themselves, for the accommodation of those who were thus brought to be made whole, and the wattled huts of the time of Satchwell were regarded as a survival of the ancient days When honest Ben thus made his historic reference to the "super-naturality" of the waters, he was simply reflecting a traditional belief that had been handed down from the most remote period, and which had given rise to the title of the Holy Well, as applied to the original spring. But whether the Honourable Mrs. Leigh did or did not "express great satisfaction at the supernaturality of the waters and the great convenience" it is quite certain that the "great convenience" had yet to come, and that Benjamin was doing his very best to hasten its arrival.

Soon after Abbotts opened his twin baths the Dog was still further enlarged by the erection of a small stable at the west end of the building. Here, from a small iron hay-rack fixed in the wall, the horse took his bite, while the man took his sup inside the hostelry, in pursuance of the legend, rudely written on a board exposed to view—perhaps written by Ben himself as the village penman—that the inn was now licensed for the entertainment of man and horse—in other words, that it was now a fully-licensed house. In the meantime, about 1790, Abbotts made up his mind

to build him a house, and did so, on the freehold left him by his uncle, close to the newly-discovered spring. He intended it as an hotel and boarding-house, and built it as such, but when he made application to the Justices for a license they refused to grant him one, telling him plainly that the two licensed houses then in existence were "more than sufficient for so small a village!" William thought otherwise, and set Benjamin to work the leverage of his pen, as usual, in his paper at Coventry. The license was refused several years in succession, the village got split up into factions over it as a burning question, and there was quite a battle-royal fought and an everlasting feud established between the Dog influence and that of the Bowling Green, the latter being the direction from which opposition to Abbott's license came. At length, however, as the historian tells us, "after having encountered great opposition," William got his license for the New Inn, which was the name given to the house, and he entered into possession of the hostelry in 1793. This New Inn is now the Bath Hotel, in Bath-street. Shortly afterwards, Abbotts let the Dog to one Sinker, who added very materially to the structure, and called it Sinker's Boarding-house. The Dog was, consequently, heard of no more. It remained in Sinker's possession till the year 1813, when Mr. Copps became the occupier, and it was at the west end of the ancient Dog that Copps's Royal Hotel was eventually built. The old inn, as I have already stated, was still standing in 1842, when Copps's Hotel was closed, and just previous to the palatial building being swept away by the London and North-Western railroad which now passes over the spot. Such is the early history of the old Dog Inn at Leamington Priors, a structure of almost classic remembrance, from its close and intimate association with the two men whom alone we have to thank for starting the Royal Spa on its brilliant course of prosperity. The little roadside alehouse, as it originally stood, has never been realised by later generations, for its original name was dropped more than a hundred years ago, its configuration and features

metamorphosed, and its precise locality never clearly explained.

The earliest guide to Leamington that has yet come under my notice, and, I believe, the first ever published, is entitled, "A brief account of the rise, progress, and patronage of the Leamington Spa Charity, instituted for the gratuitous relief of invalids, with short notices respecting the accommodation of the village, rides, walks, &c., in the neighbourhood."* This guide is announced as having been published at Birmingham, and printed by Thomson and Wrightson, of that town. It is dated 1812, but in the copy from which I am quoting there is, on the cover, a slip pasted over the imprint with the substituted date of 1813. I am careful to explain this matter of date, because the contents of the book distinctly raise the important question whether the date usually accepted as the one denoting the time of Benjamin Satchwell's death is the correct one. Nor does the discrepancy appear to be a trifling one, for it will be found to mean a discrepancy of five years or nothing. This suggestion is the more curious and perplexing, because the writer of the guide, Mr. R. J. Pratt, was also the writer of the well-deserved panegyric which appears on Satchwell's tomb, and ought, therefore, to have been well acquainted with the date of Satchwell's death. The laudatory lines, in fact, written by Mr. Pratt, are actually copied in his guide, together with the inscription on Benjamin Satchwell's tomb, giving the date of his death as December the 1st, 1815. And yet Mr. Pratt, in a preface says: "The author of these pages has derived the most heartfelt pleasure in offering a tribute to his (Satchwell's) memory, in the lines which will be found engraved on his tomb; nor is it with less gratification that Mr. O'Neil has adorned this little tract with a drawing of that tomb, and of the cottage where this father of the village resided to the 77th year of his age, in the cheerfulness of content and the utility of self-taught knowledge." The author adds that the portrait of Satchwell, as the founder of the Charity, is from a sketch taken

* See Appendix (*c*).

from life, and etched by F. Eginton, of Birmingham, from a copy sketch by O'Neil.

Now, the death of Benjamin Satchwell, as recorded on his tomb, and as quoted and copied in all the guides to Leamington that have hitherto been published, is given out as having taken place in 1815. And yet we have a guide—the first published—written by the author of the lines that are engraved on that tomb, bearing the date on its title-page of 1812, three years before the demise of Satchwell is recorded as having taken place! Nor is this all. In giving the history of the Spa Charity, Mr. Pratt makes extracts from the official records of that Charity. He quotes from its minute-book as follows:—"On the death of the Founder it became necessary to appoint a substitute in the department of treasurer; accordingly, on April 8th, 1811, at a meeting of the committee (present Henry Lane, Esq., Dr. Watson, and Mr. George Birch), it was ordered—that Mr. J. Campion be requested to accept the office of treasurer to this Charity." It was also ordered at the same meeting—"that Thomas Satchwell, son of the late Benjamin Satchwell, be appointed collector for the Charity." Here is also another extract from the official minute-book. "At a meeting of the committee, held at the Bowling Green, on Monday, 29th June, 1812, B. Satchwell's son being defunct, Richard Brown is hereby appointed the collector of the institution."

The foregoing dates, all taken from the official records of the time, not only made it clear that Satchwell died anterior to April, 1811, but that his son Thomas was appointed to succeed him at that date, Thomas himself being defunct prior to June, 1812, when Richard Brown, grandfather of Mr. James Brown, of the Parade, was appointed to succeed him. As a matter of historical accuracy, some interest may be attached to the clearing up of these evident discrepancies, and the question naturally arises—what has become of the record from which Mr. Pratt quotes? The author says: "The previous account of the Charity has been done in detail by the first projector of it." What has become of that

detailed account? Are there no records preserved among the official archives of the town, to make clear and undisputed the philanthropic efforts of this humble pioneer of Leamington's wealth, prosperity, and high social distinction among the municipalities of the Empire? Are there no parochial records to make positive even the date of his death? I am told that not only is this date obliterated by decay from his tomb, but that the testimony once recorded there to his early efforts as a citizen is illegible also! Such is life!

"But 'tis a common proof
That lowliness is young Ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber upwards turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, and scorns the poor degrees
By which he did ascend!"

CHAPTER VI.

The Mystery Explained—Early Trades and Early Traders—Postal Despatch—The Village Pulpit—A Pioneer of Art—Local Amusements—Puffs Poetic—Lively as a Lark—A Medical Cobbler.

THE discrepancy as to the date of Benjamin Satchwell's death, referred to in the preceding chapter, has naturally led to an examination of the parish registers, with the result that an historical blunder has been brought to light as curious and as unaccountable as any yet associated with similar slips of the chronological pen. In every guide and history of Leamington published since Satchwell's death, and even on his own tomb, the year of his demise is given as 1815. The parish registers show that Benjamin Satchwell, son of William and Frances Satchwell, was born on the 3rd January, 1732; was baptised on the 16th of the same month; died on the 1st of December, 1810; and was buried on the 4th. He would thus be 78 years of age when he died. The cause of the discrepancy will, perhaps, remain a mystery for ever. Mr. Pratt wrote and published his, the first, guide to Leamington in 1812, two years after Satchwell died. He also wrote the panegyric which appeared on Satchwell's tomb. In the guide the wrong date of 1815 was given, and this was, in all probability, copied by the sculptor and transferred to the tombstone. It might have been a *lapsus calami* in the first instance. It might have been a printer's error. Under any circumstances, it has been copied by the compiler of every guide since the year named, and has been circulating for 80 years in every part of the globe. It was reserved for the writer of these "Glimpses" to detect the discrepancy, and for the publisher of them, by a careful examination of the parish registers, to confirm the error and to rectify it.

But however unsuccessful Mr. Pratt may have been, in connection with the date of Satchwell's death, it is to him belongs the honour of having written and published the first guide to Leamington, and that guide is the one to which I have referred as having been published at Birmingham in 1812. The author, speaking of delightful walks round and about the village Spa, recommends visitors to "take a stroll along Holly Walk, and over a stile leading through open meadows to the hospitable farm of Mr. John Campion, on the brow of the hill, in whose house the traveller will find a ready chair and a smiling welcome, the farm being called New Comyn Farm." Here we have the origin of "Campion Hill," clearly derived from the name of the occupant of New Comyn Farm in 1812. Mr. Campion, as I have already shown, was appointed to succeed Benjamin Satchwell as treasurer of the Leamington Spa Charity, and is spoken of by Mr. Pratt as "a man of unimpeachable and almost proverbial integrity."

With regard to the romantic spot which, in 1812, was here spoken of as Holly Walk, I have the testimony of the author of "Shakespeare's Land"– a glorious edition, published by Mr. Frank Glover, of the Royal Spa, that should be the text book of Warwickshire topography and historical reference for all time—that "Regent Grove was anciently called Lillington Lane, and the Holly Walk from Clarendon-street upwards was known as Crabtree Lane." I can partially verify this by local testimony. In a cutting from the *Coventry Standard* which came under my notice some years ago, I remember, it was stated, in reference to the building operations then going on in Leamington New Town, that, among other things, "Lower Cross-street would extend from Union Row to Lillington Lane." Lower Cross-street is now Regent-street, and its junction with Regent Grove at the eastern extremity confirms the description I have quoted. Holly Walk formerly belonged to the pleasure grounds of Newbold Comyn, of which the Walk itself forms only a part, and the trees must have been of great antiquity even in my early remembrance of them. The whole of the ground

inside Holly Walk, Regent Grove, and Euston Place, was a park belonging to Newbold Comyn, and the carriage drive was a circular one, from a gate at the bottom of Newbold Terrace along Euston Place and back by the line of trees in the Holly Walk. There was also a footpath from the House to the Parish Church through what are now the Jephson Gardens, over the Mill Walk, to opposite the present Pump Rooms. The whole of this beautiful walk of hollies was at one time freely open to visitors, till some wanton damage to the trees rendered it necessary that the greater portion should be enclosed. What is now called the Lover's Grove, too, which was reached by crossing a stile at the end of Holly Walk, 60 years ago was known as The Wilderness, and is so spoken of in the early guide-books. It was a most lovely and romantic spot, consisting of a maze of umbrageous trees, their gnarled trunks entwined with bracken, ivy, and green undergrowth, in the pensive light of which the contemplative sought and found congenial surroundings. In those days, too, there was, near the stile, a magnificent hedge of holly, the green and scarlet bravery of which gradually faded away before the march of modern improvements, and has long since been forgotten.

Pratt's guide further speaks of "Bissett's Newsroom, the long-established hotel of Sinker, the house newly-opened at the corner of Clemens-street by T. Fisher, called the Oxford, and that of the widow Smith, called the New Inn, in the Old Town," as establishments worthy of special notice at the hands of visitors to the village Spa. The Bowling Green Inn, he tells us, is kept by Mrs. Shaw, where are to be found "a good table, tranquility, and comfort." After this he goes on to say: "We are called upon by youth, worth, and abilities, to pause at the door of a select seminary for young ladies, whose terms for tuition have been distributed in the village, who are prospering, and who deserve to prosper, under the conduct of the Miss Walkers." In the directory of 1829, and also in that of 1833, the address of Miss Walker's academy is given as Newbold Comyn House. The ladies named by Mr. Pratt in

his guide of 1812 are the same as those here referred to, and the seminary he mentions was in all probability the first established in the village. It is referred to as originally forming part of what is now the Crown Hotel in High-street, and at a subsequent period was carried on in the upper part of the New Town. Then the writer points out that "Mr. Bissett's picture-gallery forms part of the premises of Mr. Palmer, draper, situated in Clemens-street, the property of Mr. Read," which said street "leads up to the canal, over which Mr. Read has built an ornamental Alpine bridge to connect it with other parts of the same property." Then, he says, "to the left of the bridge is a cottage, the summer residence of William Moody, Esq., and on the right the newly-laid-out garden ground, eight acres in extent, of Messrs. Mackie and Co." The picture-gallery referred to was at the room in Clemens-street known as the Apollo Rooms and Wine Vaults, on the site of the Great Western Inn and Waring's, and the ground laid out by Messrs. Mackie was taken, two years later, by Mr. Cullis, and called by him the Ranelagh Gardens — "the Vauxhall of Leamington." Mr. Palmer was probably the first draper in business in Leamington. The writer further informs us—and it gives us an insight into the postal arrangements of those early days—that "the mail from London arrives at Leamington every day about 12, and sets off a little past two from the post-office, which is kept by Miss Satchwell." He adds that "the increase of Leamington may be readily ascertained from the increase of letters, which are in the ratio of 100 a day more than in the preceding season." The scanty accommodation for Nonconformists in the village may be gathered from the following notice, appearing in the same guide:—"There is preaching occasionally by the Rev. Mr. Percy, of Warwick, in a temporary room. N.B.—A meeting-house is intended to be built next season by voluntary subscription." Mr. Percy was an Independent minister, and pastor, for many years, of a congregation at Warwick—I think at Brook-street Chapel, but am not quite sure. I have a faint

recollection of him, as I remember him in the later years of his life—a short, stout, fresh-complexioned, benevolent-looking old man, bald, and with long white hair. His son, Mr. Joseph Percy, in after years, I remember as a reporter, both for the *Leamington Courier* and for the Warwick paper. He resided at Warwick, but at the time I speak of he was, I believe, a member of the choir at the Roman Catholic Church, then situate in George-street, at Leamington. It was not till the year 1816 that the original Independent Chapel in Clemens-street was erected, and that regular religious services were performed at Leamington, the first resident minister being the Rev. Alfred Pope, from Highbury College. The Rev. Mr. Percy was, no doubt, the first who attended to conduct religious Nonconformist services at the village Spa, several years before the chapel was built.

In 1814 Mr. Pratt published a second guide, and in the same year Mr. Bissett, referred to in the foregoing, published one also. The latter was printed at Coventry, the former at Birmingham, and we may thus assume that there was no printer yet at Leamington. Mr. James Bissett was the first to introduce the literary and artistic element into the village. He came from Birmingham, being connected with the Museum there, and, after a successful career at the Spa as one of its leading tradesmen, he died in August, 1832, in the 72nd year of his age. When he began at Leamington, in 1812, he had a picture gallery and news-room at the Apollo Rooms, Clemens-street; a museum in Gloucester-street; and his private residence was in Union Row (afterwards the Lower Union Parade). Speaking of coming opposition to Mackie's Gardens, "at the south end of the village," he adds, "There are also the Priory Gardens, now forming at the south-west corner of Terrace-walk, where,

> Instead of monks and old fat friars,
> We now have roses and sweetbriars."

In 1814, as Mr. Bissett tells us, "every house in Leamington," his own and two others

excepted, "are appropriated as lodging or boarding houses." Then he goes on to explain how the visitors and villagers were entertained. "Master Punch," he writes, "frequently makes his appearance in the village, to the great diversion and admiration of the motley multitude; wild beasts are exhibited in temporary booths, and grand displays of horsemanship in the adjacent open fields by itinerent equestrians, who most liberally distribute silver cups and plated tankards, saddles, bridles, cutlery, and shoulders of mutton to the country bumpkins, or award copper teakettles, gown pieces, ribbons, or embroidered garters, among the cherry-cheeked damsels in the neighbourhood. N.B.—The winners are led round the circle, and generally give a trifle to the clown." Mr. Bissett then turns his attention to the trading portion of the community. "There are," he says, "a great many excellent shops in the village of almost every description, and during the season we have a number of fancy dressmakers, milliners, &c., from London. Occasionally concerts are given in the Apollo Rooms, and, exclusive of the assemblies, there are frequently private dances at the Oxford and other hotels. Jugglery, legerdemain, and scientific performances of various kinds, are often exhibited for the amusement and entertainment of the visitors in the public rooms."

There are eminent pastry-cook shops,
With butchers, and brewers, and bakers,
There are fishmongers, drapers, and tailors,
But as yet there are no undertakers!
There are doctors and surgeons, 'tis true,
To prescribe how a dose should be taken,
But pale Death, like a coward, runs off,
And is happy to save his own bacon!

Our good friend Bissett was often afflicted in this way, and seemed never happier than when, like Mr. Silas Wegg, he found an opportunity for "dropping into poetry." He thus, for instance, made visitors acquainted with the resources that existed at the Spa for locomotion in those far-off days:—

Should you to Warwick want a ride,
A seat you quickly can provide.
Apply, then, early, without fail,
To Taylor or the Royal Mail.

He thus apostrophises the quaint old cottage that did duty at the top of Mill-street as the first post-office in the village :—

If letters you're disposed to send,
Or one expect from any friend,
You'll find the office near this spot—
A lowly but a neat white cot.

Then he goes into poetic enthusiasm over the fact that four boarding-houses have been built near the post-office, by Miss Satchwell, "for the better accommodation of visitors," chortling merrily thus :—

Four houses stand in Satchwell-row,
Built more for use than outward show,
Retired, well-furnished, neat and clean
As any in the village seen.

There was also an Assembly Room, built afterwards on the site of 4 and 6 New-street, and the entrance was at the S. front of Satchwell's cottage ; the *elite* used to assemble here.

The writer adds : "Mr. Copps, from Cheltenham, has entered upon the Oxford Hotel, which he has converted into a boarding-house," and finishes up with the congratulation that "the Old Town is as lively as a lark, and in the New Town the houses are springing up like mushrooms!" And that is the way they enjoyed themselves at Leamington in 1814. Speaking of mushrooms and the New Town, I have myself, early of a morning, picked up quite a handful of mushrooms, growing between the stones of the gutter, or channel, opposite to the Parade entrance to the Upper Assembly Rooms, and down in front of shops then occupied by Mr. Isaac Bright, watchmaker and jeweller, and Messrs. Nelson and White, chemists, next door. This would be about 1836. I have an anecdote attaching to both these places of business. Mr. Bright once handed to me a piece of smoked glass through which to look at the sun during an eclipse, and kindly explained to me

the nature of the phenomenon; and about the same time Dr. Jephson drove up in his carriage in front of Nelson and White's, jumped out, and entered the shop. "I'll show you a new way to mend old boots," said he with the utmost gravity to the assistant behind the counter. "Lend me your pen And a good dip of ink," added the doctor, taking the pen thus laden and placing a foot upon one of the shop chairs. His boot was seriously split at the side, and the white stocking glistened through the opening. "There!" said he, dabbing the black ink over the white slit—"Thank you!" and handing the pen back to the assistant, he hurried out of the shop, jumped into his carriage, and drove off.

CHAPTER VII.

A Venerable Samaritan—The Book and the Burden—Poet and Poetry—Pratt's Pilgrimage—Notes by the Way—First Houses and First People—Good Old Club.

THE task to which Benjamin Satchwell applied himself during the latter period of his life began in 1805. It was during this year the Leamington Spa Charity was founded by him, and I have a copy of some printed rules of that Charity, signed "B. Satchwell, treasurer and secretary," and dated 1806. In after years, Mr. John Russell was treasurer, and Dr. Hitchman secretary. Mr. Russell was junior partner in the banking firm of Tomes and Russell, proprietors of the Warwick Old Bank, who opened a branch at Leamington on the 1st of May, 1823. Their place of business at the Spa was in Church-Walk, now occupied by the publishing office of the *Courier*. The first bank established at Leamington was called the "Leamington Bank" in the prospectus, which was first issued on the 9th of April, 1835, It announced a capital of £200,000, in 10,000 shares of £20 each. Mr. Ransford was the advertised manager of the new banking company.

The mode of raising funds for the Spa Charity in Satchwell's time was primitive, and the heat and burden of the day naturally fell upon the head of the founder. Mr. Pratt has already told us of the unwieldy dimensions of the manuscript volume which Satchwell compiled. It was the habit of the old man to carry this cumbrous book round to the hotels and boarding-houses, to interview visitors, to show his numerous cases of cure, and to plead the cause of the sick and indigent for whom he toiled, doing so, as a chronicler of the time writes, "with a forcible, if rugged, eloquence, which proved his heart to be in his work."

And consider his age when he was doing all this! That age, as I have shown, has hitherto been calculated on the basis of a curious error as to date, which, from the time of his death till now, has made Satchwell appear five years younger than he really was when he entered upon the crowning work of a good and useful life. He was 78 years old when he died, and was, consequently, 73 years of age when he founded the Spa Charity in 1805. His manuscript book was his last burden, and he must have borne that burden to the brink of the grave, for among the accounts of the Charity, showing the receipts and expenditure from 1808 to 1812, I find an item of £35 4s. 5½d., received for the year 1810, "from the late B. Satchwell." This sum—a large amount for those times—would, no doubt, represent the funds collected by the founder during the last year of his life, or rather during the last eleven months of his life, for on the 4th of December he was borne to his last resting place. And what a depth of pathos one can see in that odd half-penny posted up at the end of this large amount! In it I behold the ruling passion for integrity and faithful stewardship that attuned into honest harmony every fibre of the old man's being! To me his very life was melodious with it, and that poor little solitary half-penny that I see crafted into his last account makes the crowning work of his life more pathetic and more melodious than all. Well did the good old man earn the right to live imperishably in the memories of men.

Our first maker of Guides must have been a jovial sort of personage, who evidently knew more about the qualities of port wine than guide-making. He was a frequenter of the old Bowling Green, and had an eye to the luxuries purveyed at that well-equipped little hostelry. Thus I find him turning on his poetic muse, in order to do justice to what he calls "a noble cask of port," that stood in the bar of his famous rendezvous, and

> To justify o'erflowing glasses
> Among the married dames and lasses,
> And invalids resuming bloom,
> Who congregate within this room.

What a jolly old tune the writer of our first guide could strike up when it pleased him! And we may be sure that, to the tune he piped, "the married dames and lasses," and the invalids with their bloom returning to their cheeks, were not slow to dance. It all goes to show the prevailing spirit at the Spa in that good old rosy time, when everything, somehow or other, got tinted with happy humour, even as the apples in their orchards dyed their cheeks rosy red in order that visitors, when they came, might see the bright and smiling side of things.

Having finished his port, the genial guide-maker proposes a trip to Offchurch Bury, "just to drive dull care away." The Bury, he tells us, was then the seat of Mr. Knightley. Here he discovers a peculiar chestnut tree, "of such dimensions that it has the power of enfolding in its shade, like an umbrella, 150 persons, and it stands on the lawn in front of the Bury." Then on to Stoneleigh, where he peruses an inscription in the church, and writes this graceful quatrain of his own in his pocket-book, "after reading the prose inscription in Stoneleigh Church on the tomb of the Hon. Mrs. Leigh":—

What though some pious hand has marked her name
On the pure marble sacred to her fame;
That fame which lifts its columns to the skies,
Raised on the base of all her charities.

Coombe Abbey is next visited, whither the author is still accompanied by his poetic muse, and his pocket-book is further enriched with some lines "on a portrait of King Charles the First." A passing note on Binley church, after which Baginton Hall is reached, "the seat of the Bromley's," where "the spire of the church is enveloped with ivy to the very topmost vane of the steeple, issuing from one root, the expansion of which forced its way through the stone buttress, and is a natural curiosity." Baginton parsonage is "replete with rural graces." Then on to Starton, "the ride to which, by the side of Stoneleigh Abbey Deer-park, is nature in her pomp of oak-crowned grandeur, many of the trees having stood for three or four centuries." After

this to Kenilworth, "whose awful fragments are of the most commanding kind to travellers of every description." Then back to Tachbrook, "a place redeemed from almost savage to social life by the bounty of its patron and proprietor, the Earl of Warwick." In the original grants of Tachbrook to the Canons of Kenilworth, it is called by the exasperating title of Taschelesbroc, by which name, I should think, it would have been difficult for any Earl of Warwick to have rescued it from savagery to sociality, hence its more homely title. Then we get more "lines on Stratford-on-Avon," and "an easy ride to Hockley House," after which "the White Lion at Hockley affords excellent accommodation of every kind," and the reader of this famous first guide is then left to congratulate himself that he will have done a good day's work in getting through the pilgrimage prescribed for him. It is also hinted that "when he gets back to the cosy Bowling Green at the village"—meaning Leamington—"he will have an appetite for the good things provided for him by Mrs. Shaw.

As a guide for visitors to the Spa at this period, a complete list of lodging-house keepers is given. It is interesting, as showing who were among the earliest traders of the Spa, and as an indication of the rapid growth of the place even at that time—1812-1814—compared with the period, only some ten or twelve years before, when there were only two or three boarding houses in the village. Here is the list:—George Arnell, 7, Clemens-street; William Benton, greengrocer, Church-street; H Butler, Gloucester-street; F. Cumins, fishmonger, Bath-street; J. Dolfin, cook, adjoining the Museum; Knight's wine and spirit vaults, Clemens-street; the King's Mews, New Town; Lockett, tailor, Bath-street; the Post Office, Satchwell's-buildings, and four separate houses adjoining; Probett's, the Orange Hotel, Clemens-street; E. Clarke, 16, Union-row; Read's buildings, at his baths, High-street; William Smith, Gloucester-street; Surcombe, confectioner, Bath-street; the Bedford Hotel, New Town; the Bowling Green Inn; and Copps's boarding house, late Sinker's, High-street. The William Benton, spoken

of as living in Church-street in 1814, I remember, 25 years later, living in Gloucester-street (afterwards Crockett's wine vaults), where he and his wife, a worthy old couple, then kept an eating-house. Their place was historically distinguished by the circumstance that in the front shop window was for years exhibited the following printed notice: "To be seen within, a rib of the dun cow killed on Dunsmore Heath by Guy Earl of Warwick—twopence each." This legend of the bovine rib might possibly have passed muster among the country folk of the period, but an artful anatomical student from Birmingham once found his way to the Bentonian show, and came out smiling, with the assurance that the story of the dun cow was "very like a whale!" the bone, in short, being a rib of one of these leviathans of the deep! They had many ways of turning an honest penny, had the early settlers at the Royal Spa.

Only six years previous to the publication of the list of boarding-houses I have given above, there was no private boarding-house in Leamington for the regular accommodation of visitors where they could have it all to themselves. In 1807, four were added at one stroke by the erection of Satchwell-place, which were really the first private boarding-houses erected in the village. Clemens-street was the first regular street in Leamington, and at the time building commenced there, it was generally thought the town would have to grow towards the south, and not to the north, as the river intervened, which was held to be a barrier, and there was, moreover, said to be a difficulty about getting land beyond it for building purposes. The first house built in Clemens-street was one on the north-west corner, erected in 1808, and was first occupied by a butcher. In 1840, it was still in possession of a butcher, and his name was H. Butler. The second house in the street was on the opposite corner, and while the building was known as the Oxford Boarding-house, the shop in the basement was occupied by Mr. Palmer, draper. The third house built in Clemens-street was the Stoneleigh Hotel —the Stoneleigh tap of after years—about midway

on the left-hand side going up. Then followed Booth's-terrace on the same side, which was completed in 1813. A year or so afterwards, Satchwell's Houses were erected on the opposite side, and by 1816 the street was formed in its chief outlines. Charlotte-street and Brunswick-street were not completed till 1828. The Crown Hotel was finished in 1829, and by that time the line of road on which it stands was known as the Royal Parade, it having been formerly recognised as the High-street.

The first house in Gloucester-street was built in 1808. It stood at the north-east corner of the street, nearly facing what were then known as Abbotts's baths, now and for many years the establishment of Messrs. Francis and Sons. The building was erected as a boarding house. It stood alone for several years, the Bath Hotel and Abbotts's baths standing opposite, to the west; the old well about 50 paces from it to the north; the churchyard to the east; and to the south an open space as far as the old Bowling Green, which stood alone at the south-east corner of Church-street, near the high-road to Warwick, and was approached, from the spot where the first house in Gloucester-street stood, by a wide gravelled footroad along the east side of Bath-street, with a hedge, and the row of elm-trees already referred to, running nearly the whole length from what is now Gloucester-street to the Warwick-road. This gravelled walk was then the favourite promenade of the visitors who frequented the Spa, and the spot was recognised as being the heart of the town. Wise's baths (Curtis's) stood alone at the south-west corner of Bath-street, and there was a similar open space between those baths and Abbotts's baths on the west side of Bath-street, as that which I have described as existing on the east side.

The earliest record of this first house in Gloucester-street being occupied as a place of business is in a directory of 1832. There is no record of such a place of business in the directory of 1830. In 1832, Mr. C. B. Lawrance, saddler, is given as being the occupier of the premises, which are described as 40, Bath-street. In the

same year Mr. George Hobday, chemist (who also had a place of business at Warwick), is described as being at 45, Bath-street. In 1834, Mr. Hobday is found at No. 40, having succeeded Mr. Lawrance there, and Mr. Lawrance had moved to the Lower Parade. Mr. Hobday was succeeded by Mr. Palmer, draper, who has already been described as having previously been in business in Clemens-street, and as being the first draper who began business in the village. Mr. Elliott followed Mr. Palmer at No. 40, having previously occupied a place of business on the west side of the street, opposite the old Post-office. Mr. Elliott was the father of an exceptionally gifted son—a musical genius—Mr. William Elliott, who made for himself a Metropolitan reputation, and whose compositions are deservedly regarded as classics in the musical world.

In 1812, the second house in Gloucester-street was built on the opposite or south-east corner. This, too, I am inclined to think, was at first a private or boarding-house, and was turned into business premises later. It was not in any of the trade directories up to 1833, but in that year it is referred to as Mr. Ebenezer Crick's Library, and is given as No. 1, Gloucester-street. In 1835 I myself remember it in the occupation of Messrs. Search and Co., ironmongers, who were succeeded by Mr. Bowen in the same line of business. Mr. Bowen afterwards had his place in the Lower Parade, opposite Regent Grove. No. 1, Gloucester-street and 21, Bath-street was afterwards occupied by Mr. William Welch, butcher, who retired, and was succeeded by his son, Mr. George Welch, brother of the present proprietor of the Bath Hotel. The occupier of No. 1, Gloucester-street and 21, Bath-street is now Mr. Smith, butcher. In the early days to which I refer, Mr. Welch's house and shop were 6 and 7 Gloucester-street, where the business was carried on for many years, the houses on that side of the street, the south side, being built about 1813. The site originally occupied by Mr. Welch is now Brown's stores.*

In forming an idea as to the position of houses in Bath-street and Gloucester-street at this early

* See Appendix *(d)*.

period, it must be borne in mind that the numbering was then very different from what it is now. The modern plan is to number from left to right—the way of the sun. Early Leamington numbered its houses from right to left. The numbering of Bath-street began at the south-west foot of the bridge, and ended at the south-east, while that of Gloucester-street began at the south-east corner and ended at the north-east. Abbotts's baths in 1833 were No. 8, Bath-street, Messrs. Francis and Sons, who now, in 1894, occupy the same site, have their premises advertised 34, 36, and 38. In 1833, No. 9, next to the baths, was occupied by Mr. Smith, plumber. No. 10 was a chemist's shop. Then came Abbott's-street. No. 12 was Messrs. Woodhouse and Haddon's place of business, drapers, now Messrs. Wackrill and Sons. Mr. Lloyd, glass and china warehouse, occupied No. 13, and 14 was Shorthose's Library. The Misses Lloyd, dress-makers, lived at No. 15, after which came the Assembly Rooms. Mr. G. Jull, grocer, followed; then the Misses Surcombe and Heard, confectioners; then Mr. Elliott, who afterwards succeeded Mr. Palmer at No. 40, at the corner of Gloucester-street; then Mr. Grimerd, trunk-maker. On the other side was a shop at the corner, subsequently kept by Mr. Sowley, grocer; then Mr. Isaac Ashmore, saddler, whose number was 28. No. 30 was Mr. Stafford, wine merchant, afterwards in Victoria-terrace; No. 31, Messrs. Enoch and Sons, post-office, and also the address of Dr. Luard; No. 32, Mr. Page, hair-dresser; No. 33, Nelson and Co., chemist, afterwards Herring; No. 34, Mr. John Merridew, bookseller, afterwas Mrs. Bolton, draper; No. 35, Howell's boarding house, afterwards Mr. John Merridew; No. 36, Mr. Bevington, hatter, the post-office in 1830; No. 37, Mr. Gibbs, tobacconist, then Mr. Whorall, in the same line of business, after whom came Mr. John Fairfax; No. 38, Mr. Rousham; No. 39, Mr. William Johnson, wine and spirit merchant; No. 40 (omitting the house at the south-east corner of Gloucester-street, which is in the directory as No. 1 Gloucester-street), Mr. Lawrance, saddler; No. 41, Mr. Tipping, grocer;

No. 42, being part of the site of the old Theatre, Mr. Ind, wine and spirit importer, afterwards occupied by Mr. Bentley, boot and shoe-maker, and, eventually, by Mr. Charles Hart, tobacconist; No. 43, also part of the old Theatre, as retail underground wine and spirit vaults, now the site of Johnson's establishment, wine merchant; No. 44, boarding-house kept by Mr. J. A. Squiers, manager of the Old Well, and now the *Courier* office buildings in Church Walk; No. 45 and 46, two houses on the opposite side of Church Walk, and at the back of the Old Well; No. 47, Mr. Hooper, carver and guilder, near the Old Well Pump, the premises forming a portion of some thatched cottages that originally stood on the site, enlarged and modernised. At the back of this house was a massive stone wall, ancient and crumbling, that had the appearance of having once formed part of a larger building. It was close to this wall that the wattled cots stood in the churchyard on the other side No. 48 was occupied by Mr. Heath, engraver; there was one more shop, at which, I think, Mr. Bowden, hairdresser, was, at one time, in business, and then a small wooden gate leading through a garden, enclosed by a low brick wall, to the little thatched cottages at the back, after which came Leam-terrace.

On the opposite side of Leam-terrace was a narrow slanting path, leading to the side of the river, where the post-office now stands, with a high wall forming the boundary of the Vicarage grounds. Next to the south-west foot of the bridge, on the other side, were Robbins's baths, forming one of the two houses already referred to, and in the directory of 1830 are described as No. 1, Bath-street. No. 2 was the second of the two houses, No. 3 and 4 were within an enclosure. Then came Spencer-street. No. 5 was Mr. W. Flavel's, No. 6 was close to the Bath Hotel, which was No. 7, and No. 8 was Abbotts's baths, as I have already explained.

The first houses erected in Bath-street, after the erection of the two corner houses I have named, were built on the east side in 1814, at the same time the old theatre was built. One of the

BATH STREET BATH HOTEL, THEATRE, AND ASSEMBLY ROOMS, 1822.

first was that occupied by Mr. W. Johnson, and the next by Mr. Rousham, who, in all probability, were the first traders in the street after the Bath Hotel and the baths.

Among the first houses erected on the west side of Bath-street, was that in which Messrs. Woodhouse and Co., drapers and silk mercers, carried on their extensive business for many years, and the premises adjoining. These were erected in 1818. The same premises are now, and have been for many years, occupied by Messrs. Wackrill and Sons. The pile of buildings in which this extensive business is now carried on is called Waterloo House. The senior member of the firm of Wackrill and Sons was the first Mayor of the Borough, elected on the Charter of Incorporation being granted to the Royal Spa in 1875. In 1818, Mr. Elliston, the well-known actor, acquired possession of the little Theatre, and shortly afterwards he built the Parthenon, on the west side of the street, afterwards known as the Royal Assembly Rooms, then as the Music Hall. The first inn erected in the New Town was the Golden Lion, in Lower Cross-street, afterwards known as Regent-street. I remember, when I was a boy, a benefit club used to meet at the Golden Lion, and the members, every Whit-Monday, walked in procession to church, headed by a band of music, and dressed in the regalia of the club. After service, they would return to the Golden Lion and dine there. The name of the club was that of the "Britannic Club of Fellows Odd," established in 1829. I have sometimes thought that this benefit society might have been the same institution in later years which Benjamin Satchwell started at the Old Dog Inn, soon after William Abbotts first took possession of it, about the year 1776, and that the marching in procession to church might have been a survival of the Whitsuntide festival of years gone by, held at the Bowling Green, to which reference has been made in a former chapter. The Golden Lion, it is scarcely necessary to say, was erected in the midst of green fields, and stood alone for some time, waiting patiently for the surrounding life and activity that had yet

to come but was not far off. I have heard it said that at one time there was quite a pleasure fair held every Whit-Monday near the Golden Lion, and that in a field at the back of the house mountebanks performed and shows were erected, with various rural sports and pastimes, to make things lively. My last personal recollection of the so-called pleasure-fair was on a Whit-Monday some 60 years ago. There was the usual band of music towing the good old club to church, Ivens, the head-borough constable (or ban-beggar as he was called), reminding two shady-looking mendicants that their best way out of the town would most distinctly be the quickest; Constable Ford helping to impress this upon their minds; and a solitary woman at a ricketty apple-stall eloquently trying to induce a disconsolate-looking small boy to gamble for nuts, with the seductive cry of "All prizes and no blanks!"

CHAPTER VIII.

A Lively Turtle—Something like a Sale—Our first Pump Room Band—A Fairy Theatre—Our Witty Historian—Warwick Apprentices and Leamington Waters.

I HAVE shown how William Abbotts metamorphosed the old Dog Inn, and how Sinker improved its title out of existence by substituting another. Let us follow the fortunes of the once diminutive roadside ale-house a little further, and see what came of it and of those who identified themselves with its memorable history. In a second edition of Pratt's guide, published in 1813, I find the intimation that "the long-established hotel of Sinker, in the Old Town, is being enlarged, beautified, and improved by Mr Copps, who now carries it on, with Fisher's house adjoining, as the Oxford Boarding House." Mr Copps is said to have "an immense cellar, enriched with the choicest wines," and being, moreover, "famous for his turtle soup" Choice wines, an immense cellar and turtle soup! This must have seemed quite a miraculous jump from the bread-and-cheese and small beer of the old Dog Inn only a few years before. But they were living in rapid times in those early days. And an insight, too, into the cost of this same aldermanic revelation of turtle soup is afforded by an advertisement in the Warwick paper—there was no newspaper yet published at Leamington—which intimated that "Michael Copps informs his friends that he intends dressing a fine lively turtle on Monday next, and will continue to have a constant supply during the season—terms, 14s. per quart." Real turtle was evidently real turtle in those days. But Michael Copps was a professional *chef* of the *cuisine*—quite a local Soyer—and if there was one thing on which he prided himself it was his

turtle soup. Hence his fame in that direction, and the power he had to ask a tip-top price for the creations of his culinary genius. But he had earned that fame before he came to Leamington—before he went to Cheltenham—and it had been earned among excellent judges of turtle soup, too. Furnival's Inn, High Holborn, was where Michael Copps acquired the gastronomic trick of captivating the tastes of men with turtle. He began there - and he ended there—as *chef*; and turtle soup was the hobby and ruling passion of his life. It was in 1815 he advertised the "fine lively turtle," to which I have referred, at 14s. per quart. Hey, presto! In 1841 25 years after—there was a great sale at his hotel, and this was one of the lots: "14 tins of turtle in the original packages" These 14 tins were the last of the Royal Hotel turtles, and the reflection to me is pathetic, if one cared to moralise over them.

But I have a little story to tell about those tins of turtle outside their culinary history. When, in 1841, the magnificent contents of the Royal Hotel were brought to the hammer, the sale was entrusted to Messrs. White and Son, auctioneers, it extended over 27 days, and there were 3,371 lots. The inventory of this vast amount of property was taken in due course, and the last sheet of the huge catalogue was passing through the hands of the printer, when the 14 tins of turtle were found stowed away on a dark ledge in one of the cellars – the porter cellar. The first thought was to rush headlong to the printer's, to stop the press, and to have the unhappy turtle inserted. But there was an obstacle in the way. The gentleman who took the inventory and unearthed the turtle – he was elderly and his name was Clarke – was a particularly stout personage, as short of breath as he was in stature, and rushing headlong was quite out of the question. He hastened, however, as quickly as his extreme obesity would permit, but was too late. The last sheet of the catalogue was being thrown off as he entered the printing-office. So the famous 14 tins of turtle had to be printed on a slip of paper, and the luscious lot

pasted in the catalogue in an appropriate place Should any of my readers have a copy of the famous catalogue in their possession -(I have reason to believe Mr. J. Anthony Locke, auctioneer and estate agent, who now carries on the business originally belonging to Messrs. White and Son, has several of them)—they will find the supplemental lot so pasted in as lot 250, to be sold on the 27th day of this great and locally-historic sale—on Wednesday, July 14th, 1841. A copy of the catalogue lies before me as I write, and it has a melancholy interest to me now, for I remember that my coadjutor in fixing the runagate turtle in the mammoth catalogue was my fellow apprentice—an old Leamingtonian —Mr. James Barr, for many years in business as a printer in Clarendon-street, and the news of whose recent death comes to me as these lines are written. That Mr. Copps had, as the guide-book of 1815 states, "an immense cellar enriched with the choicest wines," is fully borne out by the catalogue of 1841, where the stock of wines offered at auction represented 4,363 bottles, all of the choicest vintages.

In the second edition of Pratt's guide* we are further told that "the Cossack, a new coach, plies three times a day from Warwick to Leamington—inside seats one shilling ; that "Taylor's jaunting-car now goes the same journey for sixpence, as does also the Royal Mail"; and that "the post-office is still at the same cottage as in the life-time of Benjamin Satchwell, and is now devoted to his widow and daughter." The author is "further informed that the Miss Walker's school is removed to Upper Union-row" (this was No. 6, and is now Burgis and Colbourne's stores); that "Mrs. Rackstrow has the superintendence of the new Assembly Rooms"; that "Mr. Heavisides, from Bath, has been appointed master of the ceremonies, and has engaged a respectable band of musicians to play while the company promenade in the spacious pump-room of the new Baths, which are promised to be immediately opened for the reception of the company." Then we are

* See Appendix (*e*).

told that the last house in Union-row is now being fitted up on a large scale by F. Williams, Esq., to be ready for the Prince Regent, or any of the expected Royal strangers." The Theatre, too, is spoken of as "the little playhouse that has just been opened in Bath-street, small enough for fairy actors and a Lilliput audience." Up to that time such theatrical performances as were given in the village took place in a temporary structure "adjoining the hunting stables." The hunting stables were situated where the Crown Hotel now stands, and the "temporary structure" would probably be in an open field adjoining—a canvas-covered booth, kept going by strolling players, as spoken of by Bissett. The new Theatre stood immediately opposite the New Inn. A small ornamental verandah was thrown over the side-walk, supported by two iron rods, these being surmounted by two oil-lamps, gas being unknown in the village as yet. The interior of the building is described as having been "artistically decorated with local views and scenes from the plays of our immortal bard." The building was erected in 1814 by Mr. J. Simms, who was the first manager. The pieces performed at the opening were "The Earl of Warwick" and "Fortune's Frolics." In 1818 it came into the hands of Mr. Elliston, and after him Mr. Chamberlain was manager, the last proprietor of this little Temple of Thespis being Mr. Bennett, of strolling fame. The building was said to yield a £30 house at regular prices, but the night Kean performed in it the prices were trebled, and £97 was realised. Elliston, Macready, Ward, Munden, Kean, Braham, and Charles Matthews, were among the bright and shining theatrical lights that appeared from time to time at the little fairy building in Bath-street.

We are next informed by the local historian, about this time, that "the New Inn is in future to be called the Bath Hotel," and that it is "kept by Mrs. Smith, the daughter of the late William Abbotts"; and further, that "Mrs. Smith has enlarged the premises and made a new drawing-room." How strangely interesting these common-place facts now appear to us,

viewed by the light they shed on the constant efforts made by the early pioneers to keep pace with the ever-expanding necessities of the old village, as it blossomed into a newer and a larger life! Then we are told, with an air of pride that is delightfully quaint, that "the splendid houses in Union-row have neat balconies, and are assessed at £70 per annum." A new lodging-house is also mentioned as having been "just opened." This was the Albion Hotel, now called the Great Western Hotel, at the north-east corner of Wise-street, being the first substantial building erected in that immediate locality. The other corner, where was afterwards erected the building in which the *Leamington Courier* first saw the light, was yet an open meadow, in which cattle browsed and where buttercups and daisies grew. The *Courier* came 13 years later. The only buildings near the Albion Hotel, when it was built, were "the public brewery," the premises connected with which extended from Clemens-street to Wise-street, and a cottage or two by the canal side at the top of the latter street.

Speaking of the development of the New Town in 1813, a chronicler says: "The new Baths are now in rapid progress, and we hear the Pump-room alone is to be rated at more than £10,000." The Bedford Hotel is said to be "situated almost in the centre of as handsome a range of buildings as can be seen anywhere out of the great Metropolis." Billiard-players are reminded that "a billiard-room is to be found under Mr. Bissett's picture-gallery in Clemens-street." The writer recommends visitors, if they go to Warwick, not to go by road, but to "take the field-way along the banks of the Leam," and not to lose sight of "a lovely green lane" on their return, which will "take them back to the village by way of rural beauties that confront them at every step," and that "the end of the lane opens on the New Town." This "lovely green lane" is now fringed with charming villa residences from one end to the other, and part of it is the flourishing township of New Milverton, with its handsome church of St. Mark's standing on a site which, in my early

recollection, was a cabbage-garden belonging to one Dosha, landlord of the Bell, a roadside tavern hard by. There was a path that led into this lane near Binswood, through Quarry Field, now Augusta Place. On Quarry Field was originally a cottage, built for the use of the quarrymen, and from this quarry some of the stone used in building the parish church was taken.

Some 50 or 60 years ago, I remember, Warwick was regarded as a town remote from Leamington. The far-seeing pioneers, however, were wont to say the day would come when the two towns would be as one, both being joined together somewhat after the manner of the Siamese twins. That prophesy has long been fulfilled. The facetious Pratt, in his guide of 1812, gives us an insight into the relations that subsisted between Leamington and Warwick in 1772. "Forty years ago," he writes, "when there was thought to be nothing very remarkable about the Leamington waters themselves, Warwick apprentices were wont to jeer at their reputed effects, and were fain to set them at naught in a hectoring and domineering spirit. By way of giving effect to their humour, they were in the habit of setting off at early dawn to drink the waters in frolic, and would do so in the prodigious proportion of two or three quarts as a dose. They would stimulate emulation in their madcap exploit by laying wagers who should drink the greater quantity. Then they would repair to the village ale-house and brave each other into pouring upon this body of water an equal quantity of new beer, followed by mutual challenges to run smartly back to Warwick in a two-mile heat. "The effect," remarks the chronicler, "may be better imagined than described," and then quaintly closes with the observation that "the maligned waters thus had their revenge, serving to make manifest their medicinal character to the blockheads who questioned it." Writing on the question of trade supplies at the village, Pratt says: "Fashion and fancy have sent down their representatives to Leamington from the best parts of town and country, and there is emulation among the goddesses who shall be first in the

selection of these treasures – which of them shall out-glitter, out-lace, out-bonnet, out-cap, or out-trim the rest." It is quite clear that among the early pioneers of Leamington there was one, at least, who was determined there should be no hiding of lights under bushels. And the sequel amply proves the wisdom of this, for lo! the sleepy little village of old has become an historic town among the advanced cities of the world!

CHAPTER IX.

Leamington in 1817—Ancient and Modern Mixture—Rank and Fashion—Our Postmistress gets Married—An Early Jephsonian Glimpse—Warwickshire Racing Worthies.

THE year 1817 was locally distinguished by the fact that it brought forth a guide to Leamington, printed and published in the immediate locality. The only guides previously published in reference to the village Spa were those of Pratt in 1812, with later editions, and of Bissett in 1814, the former hailing from a Birmingham press, and the latter from the city of Peeping Tom. The next guide came a little nearer home. It was printed and published by Henry Sharpe, of Warwick, and in addition to a most minute description of the village at the time of publication, a directory was appended to the work, the first published in the history of the Spa. The value of Sharpe's guide as an historical reference rests in the fact that it came out just as Leamington was emerging from its rustic obscurity, and shows clearly the progress made in the three years of its earlier development, between 1814 and 1817.

The writer tells us that on entering the village from the Warwick-road, the only house on the left was the seat of Matthew Wise, Esq., the first house to the right being Albion House, which stood alone. He considered the latter "a singular structure, built in a sort of mock-gothic style, rather fanciful than tasteful." Behind this house, at some distance towards the Napton canal, were several clusters of small houses. Then you came upon "a good bow-windowed house," which, he tells us, had "lately been converted into a boarding-house." To this house attaches a history. It was where the Misses Walker carried on their seminary for young

ladies—the first school established in the village. When Union-row was built, the Misses Walker moved their seminary to No. 6, and their house in High-street—afterwards Royal Parade—was, as the chronicler above informs us, converted into a boarding-house by Mr. Joseph Stanley. It was afterwards kept as the Crown Hotel by William Rogers, then by William Adams in 1833, at which time Guy's Lodge held their Masonic meetings there, after which Mr. J. Stanley was the occupier, and it remained in the Stanley family for many years

Adjoining this house in 1817 were the gates of an extensive mews or hunting stables, known as Probett's These subsequently formed part of the Crown premises, being taken in when the building was enlarged. Next to these hunting stables was a shop kept by Mr. Olorenshaw, to which a reading-room was attached. A year later this shop was taken in hand by Mr. Bissett, who enlarged the premises, and, in 1818, as the chronicler tells us, "opened the building with much ceremony, the master of the ceremonies being present, calling it the new Paragon Picture Gallery" The lower part of the building was occupied by Mr George Carter, who enjoyed the distinction of being the first auctioneer to start business in the village, announcing himself as "auctioneer, appraiser, house, land, and commission agent, china and picture dealer." Behind Mr Carter's place was the South Well, and in front of it, on the other side of the street, the Road Well, afterwards known as Wise's, then Curtis's baths. At the corner of Clemens-street was a spacious shop, with handsome front, used as a jeweller's, and on the opposite corner was Copps's boarding-house—an extensive range, but most irregular and with no uniformity. This "extensive range" was, indeed, a motley group of architectural as well as historical incongruities, but I doubt very much if even the writer of 1817 knew anything of its real historic importance. At one extremity—the eastern—was the old Dog Inn, modernised a little, but still retaining its quaint, old-world characteristics, to those who cared to look below the surface. Over the door

was inscribed the legend, "Coffee Room," and there was still the little hay-rack fastened to the wall near the entrance. Next to this—going westerly—was a more recent erection, with balcony and bow-window, towering high and aggressively above the ancient inn, with the legendary word "Copps" over its hospitable portico; and then followed what looked like a stretch of glorified stables—long, low-pitched, and mean-looking—with sky-lights in the roof, small lattices, and one little bow-window at the end, surmounted with flowers in pots, abutting on to the high-road. Beyond this was a block of two houses, four or five stories high, and of such dimensions that the humble Dog, lying low at the other extremity of the range, might well have been stowed away in any one of the principal rooms. Modern balconies ran along the front. The range of buildings altogether extended from Clemens-street to what was afterwards known as Court-street, with coach-houses and stabling at the back where the apple-orchard of the Dog flourished in the olden time, and rambling out-buildings as irregular and incongruous as the frontages themselves. One of these out-buildings was the carpenter's shop connected with Copps's boarding-house, and in this shop worked for years one of the oldest inhabitants, and probably the first carpenter and joiner regularly employed in the village. He was a companion of Benjamin Satchwell's during the later years of Satchwell's life, and I have often heard him speak of the ancient village founder and his ways. This was John Holmes, a worthy representative of a good old school of plodding and industrious handicraftsmen in the early history of the town. He was quite a character in his way. "That's a plummy one - as Holmes says!" was the catchword of the town when I was a boy. The inventor of that catchword was an old man then, but his sons and I were boys together, and it was to one of them—Alfred Holmes—that my brother once owed his life. Alfred saved him from drowning, at the risk of his own life, while bathing in the river at Emscote, and for this act of bravery he deserved

COPP'S HOTEL, HIGH STREET, THE MARKET AND WISE'S BATH, 1822

and was awarded a medal by the Royal Humane Society. Both are now sleeping the long sleep.

It was near the corner of Court-street—the street was unknown in the early days of the village—that the old Dog Inn stood as a village alehouse, and just beyond, leading towards Radford, between the Dog and the subsequent Town Hall, embosomed in a profusion of wild roses and honeysuckles, nestled two or three thatched and timbered cottages, delightfully picturesque, standing back from the road in rustic gardens, with a roadside hedge fencing them off from the highway, and approached through a rustic gate. These cottages—I think they were known as Barford Buildings—had the reputation of being coeval, as to age, with the wattled huts that clustered about the old church porch at the time Benjamin Satchwell was born, and were, perhaps, with them, among the very first structures erected in ancient Leamington. In one of them, according to the tradition current during my earliest recollection, was born and lived the young woman whom Satchwell took to wife, and one is thus forcibly reminded, from the rural character of the cottage and its surroundings, of another such cottage at Shottery, not many miles away, where a certain Anne Hathaway lived, who captivated the heart of another village notable—another rustic of a strong poetic temperament—whom history afterwards knew as William Shakespeare, of Stratford-on-Avon.

Leamington had its village stocks in the early days for the punishment of offenders. My first recollection of this primitive form of chastising evil-doers was seeing a man exposed to public view in front of the old Town Hall. He sat in the stocks, which were placed on a trolley—a sort of four-wheeled tumbrel—to which shafts were attached, and I am inclined to think, although I never saw it, that at one time it was part of the degrading programme to draw the culprit round the village, and then leave him to finish his term of punishment where I once saw him. Doubt has often arisen as to the exact sight of the old Leamington Poor House. I have a ground plan

of the village, published in 1818, and the building is there shown to have stood fronting the high-road, about fifty yards from the north-east corner of what is now Althorpe-street, near a footpath that led from the highway at that point towards Whitnash fields It could not have been far from where the Warneford Hospital now stands, and was, in all probability, the original building in which the Spa Charity—founded by Benjamin Satchwell—was first administered, and which charity was subsequently incorporated with the Hospital Mission.

Leading from the bottom of Clemens-street, which was then described as an entirely new street, was Church-street on the right, and Bath-street to the left. In the latter, says the chronicler, Leamington as it was may be seen more than in any other part. At the south-west corner of Church-street stands the Bowling Green Inn—small but comfortable. This property extended throughout the whole of the block to Bath-street, and opposite Copps's hotel. It was from this spot the first balloon from Leamington ascended. Here is the old Assembly Room, whose scanty dimensions and humble appearance, compared with the splendid new rooms, strikingly show the progressive improvement of the place. On an open space near this inn, adds the chronicler, the newly-established market is held every Wednesday during the season. Church-street was marred with "thatched roofs and mud walls," among which "one or two newly-built houses reared their modern and showy fronts." Near the old post-office was Gordon House, "a lodging-house in a garden adjacent, so named in consequence of his Grace the Duke of Gordon having lodged there when he came first to Leamington." The gardens of the house were originally open up to Church-street; George-street was afterwards cut through it. Here is a photograph of the parish church in those days. "The church," says the chronicler, "looks very primitive, with its plastered walls and low, tiled roof. It has a good old square tower, in which is a peal of four bells." He then informs us that "at right angles with the church is an entirely new

street, called Gloucester-street, one side overlooking the churchyard," and that, "from the Bath Hotel towards the bridge, on the left, are several small cottages, and beyond them the Bridge Well (Robbins' Baths), near which are two good modern houses, one of them, in 1810, being the residence of their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, who have twice honoured the Spa with their presence." *

Passing over "the new bridge," the chronicler of 1817 goes on to say, "immediately before you, bursting on the astonished eye, appear the numerous, extensive, and handsome buildings of the New Town. It looks as if a modern street of London had been removed by some invisible agency, and placed down amid the fields of Leamington. There is a fine broad pavement, forming a noble and spacious promenade of some four hundred yards. Here are assembled the rank and fashion of Leamington, moving in splendid crowds, especially in the height of the season." This was written in 1817, and gives us an interesting picture of what Leamington was like at that period of its history. Mr. R. Hopton was then the postmaster, he having married the postmistress, Miss Satchwell. In the directory which forms part of the guide occurs the name and address of Mr. Franklin, surgeon, 8, Union-street. This was, no doubt, the medical practitioner with whom young Jephson first began his professional career at the Spa—a name so splendidly associated in after years with the wonderful progress and development of the town. We are further told that "the late Probett's hunting and livery stables have been taken by Mr. Merry." Here we find the starting-point of a name for many years afterwards known in connection with the racing world in Warwickshire. Mr. Merry was father of the locally famous "Sam Merry," who, I think, succeeded Mr. William Brown, veterinary surgeon, of Warwick, as clerk of the course there. Mr. Brown, I know, was appointed in 1835, and Mr. Merry's name was afterwards at the foot of "Sharpe's correct card" (another famous local

* See Appendix *(f)*.

institution) as clerk, in conjunction with that of Joseph Dunn as clerk of the scales, the latter succeeding another well-known local character in that capacity—one "Whackford Squeers"—who, I fancy, must have presided over the scales at the time of Mr. Brown's clerkship of the course. "Whackford" (I never knew him by any other name) was cashier at the Stamp Office at Warwick, where "Sharpe's correct card" was printed, and he was succeeded by Mr. Joseph Dunn, whose long and intimate connection with the compilation of that famous orange-coloured *carte* will be remembered.

When Mr. Merry's father took the hunting stables in 1817, Sam was a very small boy, but the stables were the centre of the hunting and sporting element of the county, and this brought the youngster into touch with what was evidently the ruling taste of his life, which developed in later years. His father apprenticed him to a saddler and harness maker, and he worked conscientiously and industriously at his trade in the old shop in Bath-street, till the days of affluence and ease came. He was then a prominent figure at all the crack meets and racing fixtures, no rider across-country having a better mount or doing more justice to it. A chum of his sometimes in the hunting field was Tom Oliver, a well-known jockey of the time, who had retired from the turf and kept the Star and Garter Hotel, situate at the west end of Warwick-street. Those were the days of "Jack Mytton" and his little *coterie*, that made things lively at the Spa, whose exploits, with other turf and hunting reminiscences of the county, will be dealt with in their proper place.

CHAPTER X.

Moncrieff a Mystery—The Coming of the Coaches—The Regent Hotel—More Shady Chronology—Peeping Tom at Southam—Happy Days—A Female Freemason.

If Leamington ever went wrong in its youth it must have been due rather to the multiplicity of its guides than to the good intentions which produced them. They all professed to be "new" guides, but on looking over them now it is remarkable how similar they are to each other. Literary piracy began early in the village! And how artfully they each professed to be the true Codlin and not the spurious Short! In 1818 a guide was published which purported to be by W. T. Moncrieff, and is announced as having been "printed and published by W. G. Elliston, Leamington." My own impression is that W. T. Moncrieff was a myth, and that, for the name so appearing in the title-page of the guide, that of W. T. Elliston should have been substituted. There were two Ellistons—W. G. and W. T.—as there were two James Sharps at a later period in the literary annals of the village Spa—and history is not particularly clear as to which was which in either case. W. G. Elliston is announced as the printer and publisher of the guide, but at the date of its publication there was no printing-office in the place at which such a work could have been turned out, even if there was one at all, which I doubt. There is also in the book a "short prefatory address to the public," dated August, 1818, signed "William Gore Elliston," which was the name of the famous actor. Why should a guide by Moncrieff have its preface signed by another person as the presumptive compiler? W. T. Moncrieff was, no doubt, the second Elliston, and Moncrieff would in all probability be the professional name by

which the great actor of our village Spa in those days was known. In his preface the writer confirms the fact that Pratt's guide was the first published. He says "three guides have already been published, one by Pratt in 1812-14, another by Bissett in 1816, and a third by Field in 1817." He makes no mention of Sharpe's guide, published in the latter year, and we may, therefore, conclude either that Sharpe's guide is Field's, as Moncrieff's may be Elliston's, or that the work by Sharpe is ignored because it hailed from Warwick.

But whether this fourth guide to the Spa was by Moncrieff or Elliston it gives very little information that is not found in one or other of the previous publications. It begins, in fact, with a misrepresentation and an injustice. The writer says: "Fired by the prospect of gain, and a generous love of their native village, Benjamin Satchwell and William Abbotts," &c. I have already shown that Leamington was *not* Abbotts's native village. He was born at Long Itchington. I have also shown that "prospect of gain" was *not* a failing with Benjamin Satchwell, for he died poor while doing gratuitous work for a purely benevolent institution, of which he was the founder. We are then told that "recently a mineral spring at the southern extremity of the town, almost farther back than Ranelagh Gardens, has been discovered," and that a "Pump Room and very splendid suite of baths is talked of here, under the name of the Grand Spa." Nothing came of this "talk," for no mineral spring was ever developed south of Clemens-street. The writer refers to Myton as having been "formerly a considerable village, though now depopulated with the exception of a single house called Myton Lodge." He then says: "You pass, to the left, the lace manufactory, established at Myton in 1810, and carried on under the firm of Nunn, Brown and Freeman." The lace, he tells us, was made entirely by machinery, and that "some eighty hands are employed at the factory." With the second edition of Moncrieff's guide is published a plan of Leamington—the first issued—showing the

altered position of the town as to building, compared with that some four years previous, which is very striking. A short street is marked on the plan, running from the upper part of Brunswick-street to what is now Grove-place. This projected street is named on the plan Regent-street. I knew it in after years as Aylesford-street. A later edition of Moncrieff speaks of the Bowling Green Inn being kept by Mrs. Parsons. In 1822 the coaches running were the Express, the Victoria, the Regulator, the Royal Mail, and the Crown Prince. I shall have a good deal to say presently about the battle of the coaches, which took place between the Bath and Royal hotels, that came off some 15 years later. The coaching competition of those early days forms a lively chapter in the history of the village.

In the year 1819 the Regent Hotel was completed and opened with great rejoicing, being rightly spoken of as one of the most spacious and complete hotels in the kingdom. The whole cost of erection and fitting up of this noble structure was upwards of £80,000. It was looked upon as the key-stone to the arch of Leamington's prosperity and greatness. First known as "Williams's Hotel," the title was subsequently changed for that of the Regent, by permission of King George the Fourth, who visited the hotel during his Regency. The Duke of Wellington also stayed there for some time soon after it opened, together with many other illustrious and historic personages of the period. Considering that the first brick of the first house in the New Town, where the hotel is situated, was only laid in 1808, the completion of so vast an undertaking to meet public requirements scarcely 10 years afterwards might well give rise to astonishment, and led many in Leamington to consider whether the whole scheme of development on so startling a scale was or was not a dream. "Houses," says a chronicler, "had sprung up as if by magic, on fields where, only a few years before, cattle grazed undisturbed, or the yellow corn waved luxuriantly in the autumnal season, and now comes this wonderful Palace of Aladdin—this

marvel of an hotel—to eclipse them all, springing into existence, as it were, in a night, and gladdening all eyes with its symmetry and beautv." The main entrance to the hotel was to the south, which was also the approach to the Bedford Hotel Mews, built before the hotel was erected; the west elevation was towards the Parade; the north led on to a lawn and garden in the direction of Regent-street; and the east looked towards the Newbold hills. Standing, as it did, on an elevation, the views from the upper part of the hotel were delightfully picturesque, and covered a wide expanse of country. In front of the main entrance, in those days, was a clump of beautiful elm trees, which gave the name to Regent-grove, and extended down to that line of roadway, surrounded by a stone wall. In this grove a colony of rooks made their home, and had done so from a period farther back in history than anyone could tell. They remained there till the fine old trees were superseded by the present Town Hall and Corporation Buildings, which now stand on the site. Nearly opposite the main entrance to the hotel, and within the enclosed grove, Mr. Williams, propritor of the hotel, erected for himself a handsome villa residence, in the Gothic style of architecture. This he named Denbigh Villa, and on the site of the old structure the Theatre now stands, together with the range of houses and shops known as Denbigh Buildings.

In 1826 a "guide to Leamington Spa" (fifth edition) was printed and published by Francis Smith, Southam. It gives an illustration of the old Pump Room, the old bridge, and part of what was then Newbold Wood Walks, afterwards Jephson Gardens. The two houses at the south foot of the bridge, referred to in a previous chapter, one of which was occupied by the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, are shown in the picture. The house in which the Duke and Duchess of Bedford lived (I remember both houses well) was in later years a shop, kept by Mr. Roberts, grocer and wine merchant, who also carried on business as a wine and spirit merchant at Warwick. At the north-west foot of the bridge, opposite the

Pump Room, as shown in the illustration referred to, is a five-barred gate leading into a meadow by the riverside, now where the lake is, and a hedge runs from this gate some distance northwards, showing a small rustic gate-entrance to Newbold Gardens. The writer tells us all about William Abbotts's antecedents as a native of Long Itchington, with members of whose family he appears to have been on intimate terms. He tells us also that "a chapel for the accommodation of Roman Catholics was in 1822 fitted up at the Apollo Rooms, Clemens-street, and the Rev. B. Crosbie officiates there every Sunday," and also that, "while in 1784 there were only two inns in Leamington, in 1826 there were at least 50 hotels, inns, and boarding-houses."

They were in the habit, in those days, at Southam, of getting up an imitation of the Lady Godiva show and procession which history represents as being special to Coventry, and appear to have carried it out in a particularly spirited way. A printed notice of "Southam Annual Fair," for the year 1826, lies before me. The fair is to extend over two days, and be more extensive than usual. Besides the traditional Lady Godiva, on horseback, there was to be a shepherd and shepherdess in a handsome car, with lamb and dog lying at their feet, and drawn by beautiful grey horses. The dresses of the children on horseback, it was said, would be more costly and elegant than they had ever been. There would be a living, breathing Peeping Tom on horseback, a real live "Bishop Blaize," and a proper "St. George in armour going forth to kill the Dragon." Flags, garlands, and streamers would be exceptionally profuse, and bands of music had been engaged for both days to make things lively, and for the enjoyment of those who had a taste for dancing on the village green. In these later years of agricultural depression, and the consequent exodus of labour from country to town, it is refreshing to get a glimpse of the way in which Warwickshire folk along the country-side enjoyed themselves in the older and better days, and the sensible efforts that were made to keep things together in an

agreeable way. In 1826 Mr John Russell succeeded Mrs Smith at the Bath Hotel; the post-office is said to be in Clemens-street; and Messrs. Chambers and Jephson, surgeons, are included in the directory, their address being given as 11, Union-parade. This is the earliest glimpse we have of Dr. Jephson before he became prominent as a physician.

The year 1826 was notable, too, from the fact that it witnessed the laying of the foundation stone of Copps's Royal Hotel. The ceremony was performed by Miss Maria Copps, daughter of the proprietor, assisted, as the chronicler of the time tells us, by several of her juvenile companions. "The silver trowel," says the writer, "was dexterously used, and the mortar laid on with masonic adroitness, by the young ladies." The child who thus officiated at the ceremony afterwards became the wife of Dr. Busby. In the cavity of the stone were placed a medallion of King George the Fourth's accession to the throne, a medal struck in honour of his Majesty's jubilee, a portrait of Princess Charlotte, and some coins and medals of local interest presented by Mr. Bissett. "The hotel," says the chronicler, "will form one of the most light and elegant hotels in the kingdom." The foundation stone was laid on the 13th of May, 1826. The thirteenth! Harry Furniss and members of the Thirteen Club, please note. Less than 20 years afterwards not a stone of that palatial building was left standing!

1827

Chapter XI.

Neglecting the Baby—Curiosities of Journalism—Lost, a *Herald!*—Found, a *Courier!*—Something like a Title—A Faithful Mirror at Last—Good Old Eclipse.

In 1826 the craving of Leamingtonians for a newspaper of their own became very pronounced. There were plenty of other people's newspapers, but that was not what they wanted. They hungered and thirsted for a journal of their own—one in which they could look and find themselves truthfully reflected as in a mirror. The Warwick purveyor of journalistic food—he was then our only editor, and knew it—did not pay that attention to the young and beautiful Spa as the young and beautiful had a right to expect, and as those had a right to expect whose destinies were bound up in it. He had a paternal way of looking at us that was aggravating. He regarded us, I suppose, as being still in our swaddling clothes, and insisted on pap as our proper food. We wanted something more than pap. He had, too, an awkward habit of impugning our respectability, and tried to make himself appear a very superior person indeed. "The town," he once wrote, "is by no means deficient of the most respectable society, and the company which assembled at the dress ball at the Assembly Rooms on Thursday is a sufficient proof that the above statement is correct." As if there had ever been the slightest ground for supposing any deficiency of the most respectable society! So Leamington, resenting this form of anathema by faint praise, began to agitate for a paper of its own. An attempt was made to supply the want by a side-wind. On Wednesday, the 19th of April, 1826, the first number of "The Warwickshire Chronicle, Leamington, Warwick, and Stratford Journal, and General Advertiser for the Midland Counties," was issued. It was

notified in the imprint as being "printed and published for the proprietors by H. Merridew, at the *Chronicle* office, the Square, near St. Mary's Church, Warwick." Leamingtonians looked at that imprint and winked at each other. "Ah!" they said, "This is jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire!" The Leamington agents of the paper were Mr. Lubbock, Upper Assembly Rooms, and Mr. John Merridew, Clemens-street, Mr. R. Lapworth being the agent at Stratford. Its price was 7d. The editor gilded the bait by telling us it was "intended to devote a due portion of this paper to Leamington and its affairs, to excite still more the public attention to its beauties, its advantages, its improvements, and its pleasures." A further touch of editorial gilding was the intimation that "the *Chronicle* will be printed in the best style, with beautiful types, and paper of the finest quality." It is worth noting that, as an earnest of the extraordinary ability displayed in the production of the first number of this new and super-excellent journal, the printer so arranged it that the word "Chronicle," in large type, was spelt RHRYNICLE. This came as a positive revelation to us in the way of titles to newspapers, and Leamingtonians wondered what was likely to come next. The marvel, of course, was quite capable of explanation by the initiated, but it sorely tried our faith in the ability of Warwick editors and printers to make themselves understood.

But what puzzled the Leamsiders most was the appearance of a prospectus in the first number of the *Rhrynicle*. It was headed "A Leamington newspaper," and "respectfully announced to the nobility, gentry, and inhabitants generally, that the publication of a Leamington Journal, which has been so ardently desired, will be delayed no longer than is absolutely necessary to do justice to so important an object." It further intimated that the paper would be entitled "The Leamington Herald, Warwick, Coventry, Birmingham, and Stratford Intelligencer, and Midland Counties' Advertiser," and that "its first number will appear on Monday, July 10, 1826." Why

Monday, of all days in the week? This in itself was a curiosity in journalism. Leamington folk would have looked anxiously for that particular 10th of July, but the whole thing was so bewildering that they knew not which way to look. In the *Rhrynicle* of May 31st, 1826, an editorial appeared, to the effect that the coming paper would be "published by shares, application for which may be made at the office of the paper, Bath-street—Bath-street was evidently the Fleet-street of that interesting time—or to Mr. Paterson, solicitor, Church-street." Mr. W. F. Paterson is spoken of in the directories of the time as "parish solicitor and solicitor to the Association for the Prosecution of Felons." But the 10th of July came and went, and no *Herald* either came or went with it. In Smith's guide, published later in the year, there appeared a sort of "latest intelligence" paragraph, which ran thus: "A newspaper called the *Leamington Herald* is intended to be immediately commenced." This was written some 70 years ago, and the prophecy is not yet fulfilled! The true Herald of Leamington journalism came two years later, but it came from a different source, and was called the *Leamington Spa Courier*. What became of the Warwickshire *Rhrynicle* history knoweth not.

The advent of the *Courier*, as I have shown in a previous chapter, was the beginning of a new and brighter era for Leamington, and the town took to it as naturally as young ducks take to water. Its first inception is thus described in a local guide published soon after the paper was started. "In 1828," says the writer, "Leamington, which presents every attraction as a fashionable watering-place, became desirous that its various splendid improvements should be duly noticed for the information of the public, and in consequence of a favourable opportunity presenting itself of engaging a person, who had been for years in the habit of editing and conducting a provincial newspaper, several gentlemen, professional men, and tradesmen called a public meeting, at which numerous shares were taken for the purpose of establishing a paper devoted to

the interests of this rising Spa. The Journal, entitled the *Leamington Spa Courier*, made its appearance at 4, Wise-street on the 9th of August, 1828, and has, since that time, considerably and deservedly increased in circulation in this and the adjoining counties. It is published every Saturday morning, at the office in the Royal Parade, High-street and Wise-street. Frequently this ably-conducted journal is not printed till a later hour, in consequence of the intelligence which reaches Leamington from the Metropolis on the morning of publication being fully given in the *Courier* of the same day." The gentleman here referred to was Mr. James Sharp, who, as I have already shown, with his father and Mr. John Fairfax as co-founders, was editor of the *Courier* for many years.

I should think the sponsors of the *Courier* must have been a little bit anxious about its original title, judging from the length of it; and I am tolerably certain you might go through the whole domain of journalism, past and present, and not find a newspaper with a title half as lengthy. It beats the record. Here it is exactly, without omitting a single letter: "Leamington Spa Courier, and Alcester, Atherstone, Coleshill, Henley-in-Arden, Kineton, Kenilworth, Knowle, Nuneaton, Rugby, Solihull, Southam, Stratford-on-Avon, and Warwick Borough and County Gazette." Shakespeare has made one of his characters ask what there is in a name. Those who christened the *Courier* must have thought there was a great deal in one—and they were right in thinking so. Our first paper had a distinct smack of Royalty about it in the number of its patronymics.

One gets an interesting glimpse of the town and district 64 years ago by taking a peep at this first number of the first Leamington paper. You see the old place as in a looking glass. Mr. George Carter, auctioneer, has a column of sale advertisements. Roby and Co., Gloucester Hotel, Clemens-street, are "wine merchants to their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester." The New Inn, commercial and posting house, Southam, is kept by John Bodily.

Mr. and the Misses Russon advertise their commercial academy in Henley-street, Alcester. Vincent Figgins tells the world he supplied the type for the new paper, and "flatters himself it cannot be excelled." The leading article is surmounted by a Royal coat of arms as big as a crown-piece, and the editor promises to do everything he possibly can to further local interests. There is to be a grand *fete* at the Ranelagh Gardens, given by the proprietor, Mr. Cullis. F. Wortham and Co., Clemens-street, announce "ball dresses for the Hospital ball." Marshall and Son, music warehouse, Bath-street, advertise their business. The Rev. J. A. James is to preach at the Independent Chapel, Clemens-street. Mr. James was the minister who preached the first sermon when this place of worship was opened in 1816. T. Rackstrow keeps the Blenheim Hotel (afterwards kept by Mr. Jarman, then by H. C. Hughes, and called the Stoneleigh Hotel), Clemens-street. Libraries in Bath-street at Leamington, and High-street at Warwick, are notified as being carried on by John and Henry Merridew. Mr. Frederick Marshall, who was organist at the Episcopal Chapel, advertises preludes for the pianoforte. There is a sale of drapery by T. Good and Co., Clemens-street; Parisian stays (we call them corsets now) are to be seen to perfection at Miss Lloyd's, Bath-street; Ind and Poole are wholesale wine merchants having their place of business under the old Theatre in the same street; while Bettison's Library, the Paragon, Royal Parade, High-strret, has just been disposed of by S. Bettison to C. J. Morris, and Mr. Bettison betakes himself to a larger business in the Upper Parade. There is a long string of sales by Margetts and Sons, of Warwick, and the Rev. S. H. Parker, B.A., of Henley-in-Arden, advertises for pupils. Among the literary matter there is a poem by our old friend Bissett, on the Leamington Bazaar Charity. The Theatre is announced to be opened, under the management of Mr. Chamberlain, and the public are informed that "on Wednesday next our theatrical hemisphere is to be illuminated by those brilliant stars—Matthews and Yates." This, of

course, refers to Charles Matthews and to Mr. Yates, the latter the father, I presume, of the late Mr. Edmund Yates, of the *World*. And last, but not least, we are told that "the Royal Leamington Eclipse new post coach commenced running on the 28th of July (1828), calling at Copps's Royal Hotel on its way to London, doing the journey from Leamington to London in precisely 10 hours, and being driven from Birmingham to London alternately by only two coachmen!" Good old Eclipse! The same journey is now performed in something like two hours with only one driver. But the Eclipse broke the record of those days, and was the coach that carried the first parcel of *Courier* newspapers from Leamington to London.

CHAPTER XII.

Theatrical Superstition—A Lovely Black Eye—Our Double-headed Journal—The Stamp Duty and its Troubles—Editorial Succession—Popular Prices and Progress.

A few words more about the contents of the first number of the *Courier* before I pass on to other matters, historical and otherwise, relating to this notable pioneer of the Press at Leamington. The editor began by bewailing the lack of appreciation bestowed upon the efforts of the local theatrical manager, Mr. Chamberlain, and by way of explanation as to cause and effect he incidentally remarked that a correspondent had sent him a note explaining that, "On the first appearance of Miss Foote upon the Leamington stage for that particular season of 1828," when the lady in question was singing "I'd be a butterfly," a large and beautiful moth "fluttered around her head during the song," and that "the insect turned out to be a death's-head hawk moth." This the correspondent held to be a bad omen for the Theatre, and the inference was that the death's-head moth had thrown a wet blanket over the business at the little play-house in Bath-street. Another coincidence of a similar kind at Leamington occurs to me. Some years after the flutter of the death's-head moth around the head of Miss Foote—on which incident, by the way, our old friend Bissett improvised the following:

'Twas the light of her beauty—
Than sunshine more rare—
At the risk of burnt wings,
That attracted him there,"

the original building in Clemens-street, used as an Independent Chapel, and to which I myself, when a child, remember to have been taken when thus used for divine worship, was turned into a

Theatre, and on the night it was opened an old inhabitant of the town, Mr. Jackson, architect, was seized with apoplexy during the performance, from which attack he died. The transformation of this building for theatrical purposes was due to the efforts of a son of Mr. Elliston, the actor, assisted by Mr. Simpson, the then lessee of the Birmingham Theatre. One of the earlier companies that performed there was brought by Mr. Jackman, who at that time was lessee of the Theatre at Stratford-on Avon. * I have seen Buckstone and Mrs. Fitzwilliam there; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean in "A Wife's Secret"; the veteran actor, T. P. Cooke, in "Black-eyed Susan'; and Macready in "Hamlet." But business was never particularly flourishing, the incident of the first night always appearing to throw a gloom over everything, and the building is now used for the purpose for which it was originally intended. I remember at one time part of the structure was used as a lecture-room, and on one occasion a man named Smith, who claimed to be a lineal descendent of Joe Smith, the "Mormon Prophet," delivered a lecture there on Mormonism. He was refuted on the platform—and cleverly refuted, too—by one Mr. Locke, a pattern-designer at the Foundry I think he was, whose arguments were found by the disciples of Mormonism to be so inconveniently conclusive, that the said disciples put out the lights, and there was a free fight in the dark. In that scrimmage I got the first "lovely black eye" I ever had in my life—and the last.

From August the 9th, 1828, to November the 21st, 1829, the official copies of the *Courier* forwarded to Somerset House were signed "James Sharp." They were afterwards signed "James Sharp, sen., and James Sharp, jun." Then for a few months in 1836 the signatures were those of "E. Howe" and "John Russell," countersigned in some instances by "Nathaniel Sharp." On the 29th of April, 1837, the signature "G. C. Liebenrood" began. On the 3rd of October, 1835, a mysterious editorial appeared in the paper, to the effect that the proprietary were

* See Appendix (*g*).

determined to "plant our standard in the county town," for which purpose the paper would have "two separate and distinct titles," the literary matter under one of them being "conducted by J. Sharp, junior," and the other "under the general superintendence of J. Sharp, senior, the sole proprietor." The county wondered what it all meant, and people pictured to themselves a sort of Gog and Magog, rolled into one, preparing to go forth with deadly intent in order to plant an imaginary standard on somebody's imaginary walls for the benefit of posterity. On the second of January, 1836, the mystery was explained, and the *Courier* began the New Year with a sort of dual existence—a psychological kind of double life coming out bravely with two separate and distinct headings, one on the top of the first page as it had stood from the beginning, and the other, in type equally striking, running all across the third page, the second title being *The Warwickshire Standard*. Under this heading, in large type, were the words "printed and published by James Sharp, the proprietor," and under this another line, also running all across the page, the well-known quotation from "Junius," which then appeared in the paper for the first time: "This is not the cause of faction, or of party, or of any individual, but the common interest of every man in Britain," the imprint on the fourth page announcing James Sharp as the "proprietor, printer, and editor." In this number appears an advertisement, announcing that "James Sharp, jun., has opened a new printing, bookselling, and stationery establishment in High-street, Warwick (two doors from Messrs. Greenway and Greaves's Bank) where the *Warwickshire Standard and Leamington Spa Courier* is ready for delivery every Saturday morning at 12 o'clock." The youthful Spa had long been under what our first editor-militant, with his usual devotion to picturesque metaphor, called "the iron heel of Warwick editorial oppression," and the double-headed arrangement was a determination to carry a war of reprisal into the very heart of the enemy's territory. Well, yes, the journalists of

those days had the same tender affection for each other as those of the present period have. But you must remember that the baby-town was no longer in leading-strings, and had at last rounded on those who sought to keep it so. The *Courier* was the champion that gave voice to the sentiment of the time—that Warwick and Leamington were meant for each other, and that there would be short shrift for those who attempted to keep them apart.

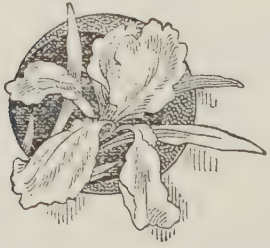
This arrangement as to the proprietary of the *Courier* went on without change till the 22nd of October, 1836, when the imprint announced that the paper was printed and published by Ebenezer Howe, of Regent-street, and John Russell, the younger, of Bath-street, assignees of James Sharp," the paper still being printed at the offices in Wise-street. It continued its dual heading under the same publishers and with the same editor till the 29th of April, 1837, when it appeared for the first time with the title *Leamington Spa Courier and Warwickshire Standard*, in one heading on the first page, the quotation from "Junius" being retained. On that date the imprint bore the name of George Christopher Liebenrood as the proprietor, the paper being "printed at his offices, Royal Parade, High-street," the official copy that went to Somerset House bearing a characteristic signature surrounded by a serpentine flourish which seemed to proclaim to the world that the writer of the signature meant business and that there was to be no nonsense about it. On the 29th of January, 1838, the first number appeared of the *Warwickshire Times*, printed by James Taylor, Church-street, Warwick; and on the 11th of August in the same year the words "The Royal" were added as a sort of loyal corona to the heading of the *Courier*, and on that date it came out with the full heading, "The Royal Leamington Spa Courier and Warwickshire Standard," which heading, till recently, it retained, when the words "The Royal," added in 1838, were struck out.

In the old days of the newspaper stamp duty and the advertisement duty of 1s. 6d. for

every advertisement, the *Courier* was persistent in its efforts to get the restrictions repealed, and led the van in Warwickshire to that end. The editor was constant and bitter in his protests against "our paper being disfigured by the destructive die, which is as much a mark of serfdom as was the iron collar of slavery." On the 31st of December, 1836, he wrote, "Our stock of stamps is exhausted, and, should no fresh supply come, there will be no *Warwickshire Standard and Leamington Spa Courier* next week." The paper for printing was manufactured in the north, was conveyed to London by canal, there stamped, and was distributed in the provinces by the same tardy process. In the winter of 1836 there was an intense frost, the navigation of the canals was stopped—hence those tears. Two years later, owing to a similar delay, the editor wrote: "A portion of our issue this day is printed on unstamped paper," adding that "we have made the necessary affidavit," an affidavit being required in such cases. The price of the paper was 7d. per copy from the time it started in 1828 till the 10th of September, 1836. On the 17th of September the price was reduced to 4½d. This change took place when the property passed from the hands of Mr. Sharp into those of his assignees. In 1866 the price was reduced still further to 3d., in 1882 to 2d., and in 1894 to the all-powerful penny. And in proportion as the price has been reduced, the size of the paper has been increased, the *Courier* at a penny to-day being more than twice the size of the paper in 1828 at sevenpence. What more eloquent teaching as to our local prosperity do we require than this? And what more striking testimony can we have of the wisdom of gradual reforms that adapt themselves to natural growths?

Mr. Sharp's connection with the county of Warwick began in 1815, and with the *Courier*, as its first editor, at its foundation in 1828. In 1833 he started the Leamington Literary and Scientific Society, of which he was secretary. He retained the editorship of the *Courier* for 33 years, and relinquished it in 1861 on becoming con-

nected with the *Plymouth Mail*, afterwards with the *Leicester Journal*, and finally with the *Shrewsbury Journal*. During the proprietorship of Mr. Liebenrood, the literary staff of the paper was, for a time, strengthened by the advent of Mr. J. E. Carpenter. Mr Liebenrood was succeeded in 1855 by Mr. Joseph Glover as proprietor. Mr. Glover, who is 12 months the senior of the journal he thus acquired, brought great business capacity to bear upon its development with marked effect, and raised it at once to the very front rank of high-class provincial journalism, enlarging its usefulness, increasing its influence, and establishing it on a sound foundation. On Mr. Sharp retiring from the editorship in 1861, he was succeeded by Mr. Raleigh Baxter, who, in turn, was followed by the late Mr. J. Tom Burgess, F.S.A., who afterwards took up the editorship of *Berrow's Worcester Journal*. In 1878 Mr. Ivens, now of the *Nottingham Guardian*, became the editor, and was succeeded in 1885, by Mr. Frank Glover, the proprietor, who now occupies the editorial chair.



CHAPTER XIII.

Carthage Bombarded—David and Goliath—Red-hot Shot—A Snake in the Grass—Stop the Press!—Walter Savage Landor—A Bitter Weed.

It was an exciting event in the history of local journalism, and an important one from a political point of view, was that siege and bombardment of Warwick by the *Courier* for journalistic foothold in the county town. I have seen, in some old prints that portray the storming of Carthage, representations of double-headed battering-rams, worked by muscular and herculean ancients. The *Courier*, as I have shown, was turned into a double-headed battering-ram for the purpose of bringing the political stronghold of the county to its bearings, and the new engine was worked by men as mentally muscular as any of the giants were physically who moulded the destinies of the ancient world. The idea strikes me as being unique in the annals of journalistic effort—two distinct headings and two separate editors! Our local Carthagenian bombardment began by an ornamentation of the grey old walls of Warwick with attractive posters, that looked like beauty-spots on wrinkled and withered features. The Butts were alive with them. The Saltisford glistened with them. All the entrances to all the Gates were rampant and aggressive with them. Every point that met the eye where a conscientious bill-poster felt called upon to stick a bill, there a bill was stuck, and the "dear old, sleepy old, county town" woke one morning to find itself bandaged and plastered all over with mysterious patches, as though it had been getting into an awful row over an election—as they did occasionally in those free and independent days of Pottses and Eatanswills—and had gone in largely for sticking-plaster in order to hide its injuries and keep itself from tumbling to pieces. And in the

hotels and inns, too—the Warwick Arms, the Woolpack, the George, the Castle, the Bull's Head—the mysterious poster found a resting-place wherever the vote went that way, and wherever it went the other way the poster was talked about if it was not permitted to show itself. Our first regular professional bill-poster at Leamington in my early recollection, who reduced the dissemination of useful information to a science by making dead walls speak, was Ted Edwards, brother of Mr. W. H. Edwards, who, in after years, became publicly known throughout the show and exhibition world in connection with a panorama of "Canada and the Far West." Whether Ted had the management of the work in connection with waking the old county town to a sense of its responsibilities with regard to local journalism, I cannot say—I daresay he had—but the waking-up was most successfully done. The subject was the talk of the place, inside and out—and the following was the legend that set the good old borough buzzing from one end to the other:—

FORWARD!

We'll plant our *Standard* in the county town,
To proudly float in freedom on the wind.
No laggards we, to linger long behind,
When forward wait life's honours and renown!

We'll plant our *Standard* in the county town,
And let it, a triumphant signal, wave
O'er spot where foul corruption finds a grave,
By truth and honest effort stricken down!

We'll plant our *Standard* in the county town,
Then tell us who, by craft and stratagem,
Shall dare to yonder rising river stem
That swells to bear us to our victor's crown!

This red-hot missive was from the pen of Mr. J. E. Carpenter, to whom I have already referred. Mr. Carpenter, who hailed from the Metropolis, was a prolific writer of lyrical verses, many of which were set to music and published. Some of his most vigorous lines were written on the Coronation of Queen Victoria. He was connected with the literary staff of the *Courier* for some years, and among other contributions he made to its columns was a translation, by his wife, from

the French, of a story entitled "The Country Gentleman," which appeared in the *Courier*, about the year 1847, as a serial tale, being, I believe, the first published by a newspaper in the history of the Spa. "The Country Gentleman" was not quite so striking, from a literary point of view, as its promoters might have hoped it would be, but its non-success was due more to a circumstance outside its literary merit than from any cardinal defect from which it might or might not be said to suffer. And herein are to be found a story and a joke. I will tell the story. The joke —if one can be found in it—will tell itself. For a long time the *Courier* suffered from an epidemic which nobody could explain. The most curious literal errors were constantly found in its columns. Proofs were kept and compared, with a view to detection, and although it was found that errors were wilfully brought about by somebody, that somebody successfully baffled all attempts to bring the offence home to him. One week, a local race-goer of note found himself spoken of as a "well-known snorting character," snorting, of course, being originally meant to read sporting. But the snorter happened to be particularly stout, and was a famous roarer. The coincidence, therefore, was very striking. So was the snorter, for it brought him to the office with a heavy-riding-whip, and if there was no striking done on that occasion, it was because there was nobody handy to strike who looked like a culprit. On another occasion, the post-office was spoken of as the "Lost Office," a post letter or two having gone astray about that time; a tool was made a fool of, bills were turned into pills, and the meaning of words was constantly being perverted in a similar way—sometimes with a witty result, at other times disgraceful and scandalous. "The Country Gentleman" once got tampered with in the latter fashion, and in a manner impossible to describe. "Stop the press!" roared the then proprietor, Mr. Liebenrood, crashing open the door of the office and bounding in with his face fiercely aflame, his dark wiry hair, always erect, sticking up from his forehead like stubble. "Stop the press—damnation!" he bellowed, standing in the centre of the

cavernous printing-room, his eyes, piercing and aggressive, looking like flashes of blue electric light. We stopped the press, but more than half the week's issue of papers had to be cancelled and printed over again! A supreme cataclysm followed, compared with which all previous ructions were as the cooing of sucking-doves. Up to that time I used to think how I should like to be the proprietor's eldest son. I never thought so afterwards, for that youth was the culprit, and when his father found it out ——! But to return to Carthage and the bombardment.

The ground having been prepared by the discharge of the foregoing poetic thunderbolt, a dramatic sketch was fired off on the "Warwickshire Standard" side of the *Courier*, mercilessly satirising the opposition and making ducks and drakes of the borough Radicals, who had been carrying on political matters with a high hand. "As we anticipated," said the editor in his editorial, "the planting of our *Standard* in this ancient borough has already created no little consternation in the Radical camp. We are not surprised that our contemporary at Warwick should be dismayed, for he has been disturbed in his privilege of giving his own account of men and measures." The dramatic sketch, which came with the thunderous effect of an entire park of artillery, was evidently provoked by a previous comment made by the Warwick editor, who, replying to the Leamington editor's acceptance of the Warwick champion's challenge to mortal combat, contemptuously refers to him as "the youthful scribe," and valiantly declines to "fight with children!" Whereupon the "youthful scribe" goes for his opponent thus:—

[Enter Dame Twaddle's printer's devil.]

P.D.—Behold the conquering hero comes! Behold!

[Enter Leviathan, clad in armour. Flourish of trumpets.]

LEVIATHAN.—Where is this mighty man of war who dares accept my challenge?

1ST RAD.—Sire! Behold him *there!*

LEVIATHAN.—There? Him? Where? I see him not. Mine eyes encounter nought but empty space. Where? Whom?

2ND RAD.—Dread King! He stands before thee large as life!

LEVIATHAN (contemptuously).—A mere puppet! Why this mockery, minion? I do not war with boys.

[Exit in a rage]

At the foot of the sketch, of which the foregoing is but a short extract, is an editorial note, to this effect:—"Perhaps the youthful scribe bears a sling, from which he may some day or other discharge a missile which will make a fatal impression on the forehead of this modern Goliath!" And in this militant fashion the "youthful scribe" hammered away, week after week, with his double-headed engine, honestly and fairly capturing the county by storm. The cream of the joke lay in the fact that the Goliath spoken of, as the head of the opposition journal, was a man of diminutive stature, and the most unlikely person in the world to strike terror into the hearts of people, youthful or otherwise. This was Mr. W. Hersee—the most meek and mild-mannered of men—who had only just succeeded Mr. Cooper as editor of the Warwick paper Some years after this, when Leamington had grown strong, and the *Courier* had grown with it in its strength, our first fighting editor had to wage another war in the same county town on behalf of the farmers of Warwickshire. In 1850 the agricultural interest was assailed. Then followed the same clash of journalistic arms between the two opposing interests as that which distinguished the earlier battle. The fight was bloodless, but severe—and agriculture went under.

No more shall Ben Dizzy,
Or Darby the busy,
Or other Protectionist oaf,
Send *Sharp* corn-law sabre
To slaughter our labour
And lessen the size of our loaf!

Thus chortled a local rhymer of the time, when in 1851 the abolition of Protective duties on corn had brought what the rhymester regarded as a blessing, but in which those he sneered at saw disaster.

Shall your loaf be made bigger
By dagger and trigger?
Play's play—but remember the frogs!
That which big loaf brings *you* in
Must end in *my* ruin.
On your feasting *I* go to the dogs!

This was the rejoinder from the side on which our first editor fought. And surely the writer of that rejoinder was a prophet! What do we see, in the light of present events, but a verification of that prophecy to the letter?

Mr. Hersee, the opposition editor, was succeeded, in 1852, by Mr. Churches, who hailed from London, and previously from Cheltenham.* To this gentleman unconsciously belongs the distinction—such as it is—of having accepted for publication the first bit of rhyme I ever strung together in my life. It was sent to him anonymously, as editor he passed it on for publication, and as compositor on the same paper I had the pleasure of setting up my own precious production in type, and gloating over its appearance in print. This was 40 years ago, and my secret has been kept from that day to this. While on poetry, I may mention that in October, 1851, I had what I regard as the honour of setting-up in type an unpublished poem, handed to the editor of the paper referred to, by Walter Savage Landor, the famous poet, whom I used frequently to see at Warwick, where he resided with his sister. The poem appeared on October 18th, 1851, and was addressed to "The President of France." It was full of bitterness, as the opening verse will testify:—

Hast thou forgotten—thou more vile
Than he who clung to Helen's Isle,
Rather than fall among the brave—
Hast thou forgotten so thy flight,
When sparing Philip's peaceful might
Disdained to hurl thee to thy grave!

Another Warwick poet—Mr. Frederick Enoch—once presented a copy of his poems to Landor, who, while congratulating him on his poetic capacity, remarked, with his usual inability to say a graceful thing without sneering cynically at

* See Appendix (*h*).

something or other, that "Warwick was the last place in the world where he should think of finding a poet." Landor was a friend and companion of the celebrated Dr. Parr, who lived at Hatton from 1783, and the two were often together at Leamington in the old village days. Bissett, in one of his early poems, thus refers to it:—

> When at the Green gay Scotia's star
> Led down the dance with Dr. Parr;
> When tripped a Landor and a Leigh
> To grace our ball-room revelry.

The Green was the old Bowling Green Inn, "Gay Scotia's star" was the Duchess of Gordon, and Landor's companion in the dance may have been one of the Leighs of Stoneleigh Abbey. Landor was at school at Knowle when five years of age, and, as his father did before him, spent much of his time at Warwick in after years.

CHAPTER XIV.

Fresh from Cambridge—A New Idea—Catching a Tartar—Tattle at the Stoneleigh—Before the Lord Chief Justice—A Footman's Fancy—Kicked Out.

WHILE the struggle on behalf of the village Spa for a voice in the county was going on, a flank movement was made, which threatened, in its own immediate territory, the interests championed by the *Courier* with so much vigour and ability. On the 6th of July, 1833, the *Leamington Free Press* was started, or, as the chronicler of the period more accurately describes it, "came to Leamington." It would have been still more accurate to say that it was brought there. To start a paper in a district is one thing. To bring a paper from another town, that is printed and published there, is quite a different matter. The first inception of this ingenious venture is historical, as marking a new era in the dissemination of political views. The paper was associated with the *Northampton Free Press*, which, again, was an offshoot of the *Cambridge Independent Press*, this, with several other branches, forming a group, or syndicate, of papers that were rushed into being as a result of the Reform agitation of 1832. The chief mover of this political propaganda was Mr. Weston Hatfield, of Cambridge, editor and proprietor, at that classic seat of learning, of the *Independent Press*, and his paper formed the pivot round which the group of journalistic satellites revolved. The *Free Press* at Leamington was, consequently, only a Leamside edition of the Cambridge and Northampton papers of that name—a sort of barn-door journalistic fowl, sent to the banks of the Leam to do the cackling whenever the political wirepuller on the banks of the Cam laid a literary egg. This journalistic method was quite new to Warwickshire in those days, and public instinct, when the public mind

came to realise it, rebelled against it, notwithstanding that the promoters of the new idea told advertisers how they would "enjoy the privilege of a two-fold publicity," and readers that they would "have the advantage of experienced and consistent writers and reporters, with the best channels of political intelligence."

On its introduction in 1833, the *Free Press* was announced as being "published every Saturday morning, at nine o'clock, at Mr. Hughes's Bazaar, Clemens-street, Leamington, where orders and communications are requested to be directed." Thirteen months after its advent it stopped for a short time, and then came out as No. 1 of the "Leamington Press and Warwickshire Journal of Fashion and Literature, Politics, Agriculture, and Commerce." It contained a notification that "Henceforth this journal will appear on Thursday morning, be printed by William Hatfield, and be published at Mr. Ebenezer Crick's, No. 1, Gloucester-street." This arrangement went on till April the 9th, 1835, when the *Press* came out with its title altered once more. It was now "The Leamington Chronicle, Warwickshire Reporter, and General Advertiser for the Counties of Warwick, Worcester, Leicester, Stafford, Gloucester, Oxford, and Northampton." Mr. John Fairfax, 37, Bath-street, was announced as the "Printer and publisher for self and co-proprietors," and the paper was, no doubt, now printed in the town for the first time.

In a few months afterwards the *Chronicle* found itself in troubled waters. A letter appeared in its columns having reference to the affairs of Mr. Gomm, the then proprietor of the Bedford Hotel, which letter was alleged to have been a libel on a local solicitor, Mr. W. C. Empson, of No. 7, Church-street, a legal practitioner of eminence in his day, whose figure was very familiar to me in those days, from his frequent visits to the *Courier* Office, his animated confabs with the proprietor on local affairs, and his notable characteristic of punctuating those confabs by belabouring the counter with his fist, and taking prodigious quantities or snuff. The publication of this letter culminated in a trial, which took place in the

Court of Queen's Bench, on the 12th of February, 1836, before Lord Chief Justice Denman. It was on the 20th of August, 1835, the letter appeared in the *Chronicle*, and it was copied into the *Courier* the following week. The defendant in the action was Mr. Weston Hatfield, proprietor and editor of the *Cambridge Independent Press*, whose son it was, probably, or brother, who had the management of the Leamington offshoot, Mr. Weston Hatfield himself residing at Cambridge. He was charged with libel, and also with "Uttering some slanderous observations on the conduct of the plaintiff, as an attorney, in a conversation which took place at the Stoneleigh Hotel, at Leamington Priors." The Stoneleigh Hotel was rather a notable place of public resort in its time, and was one of the more characteristic hostelries of the Spa in its village days. It was built in 1812, being the third house erected in Clemens-street, and was opened as the Blenheim Boarding House. Three years later, I find it being described as "Opposite the meeting-house," and in the occupation of T. Rackstrow, whose family are shown to have been still in occupation in 1828. They first came to the village in 1811 or 1812. Pratt's guide of the latter date speaks of "the Rackstrows, from Oxford, having opened a repository in Union-row"; and in his guide of 1814, he says "Mrs. Rackstrow now has the superintendence of the Assembly Rooms." In 1830, the Misses Rackstrow were in business at No. 2, Union-parade, and the Blenheim was then kept by Mr. Jarman. In 1832, it is recorded that "Mr. Jarman has left the Stoneleigh Hotel, formerly the Blenheim, and has gone to the Clarendon Hotel, Union-street." The Union-street thus described was afterwards known as Lansdowne-place, the Clarendon Hotel being at the north-west corner. It was opened in November, 1832, by Mr. and Mrs. Jarman, who were succeeded at the Stoneleigh Hotel by Mr. R. C. Hughes, of Shrewsbury. Mr. Hughes was the occupier in 1835, at the time the affair took place which gave rise to the famous libel action against Mr. Hatfield. The trial ended in a verdict for the defendant, and during its progress there was

perfect stagnation at the Spa, owing to the large number of witnesses drafted off to the Metropolis to give evidence. The *Courier* would seem to have been left to take care of itself, if we may judge from the following editorial, which appeared in the issue published while the trial was on:—"We must this week throw ourselves upon the kind indulgence of our friends, for the various inaccuracies that must of necessity ensue from the unavoidable absence of the editor, reporter, and clerk, all belonging to this establishment, being this week summoned to London on a trial in the Court of Queen's Bench." This trial seems to have driven the Cambridge contingent out of the Warwickshire field, for, as I have already shown, six months afterwards Mr. John Fairfax was announced as sole proprietor of the paper. He continued his proprietorship till June 21st, 1838, when the journal was passed on to Mr. John Merridew, and published by him at 27, Lower Union Parade.*

In the meantime, the *Courier*, in the hands of its gladiatorial editor, went steadily ahead. In 1837, it came into the hands of Mr. Liebenrood, still under the editorial control of Mr. James Sharp. Mr. Liebenrood was clerk at the Episcopal Chapel, at the top of the Parade, now Christ Church, and master of the National School, at that time held in a building in Kenilworth-street, which afterwards gave place to the Albert Hall. The adjoining old-established hostelry, the Rose and Crown, was owned by Mr. Liebenrood, and the occupier in 1837 was Mr. William Smith. This house must have been erected about 1830, as it does not appear in the directory of that date, but it is seen in the directory of 1832, with W. Smith as the occupier. Probably Mr. Liebenrood built it. Mr. Smith was, no doubt, the first occupier. My introduction to George Christopher Liebenrood was a curiosity. "Here he is!" said my conductor, towing me into the front shop of the old *Courier* Office in Wise-street. That front shop! It was a shady-looking shanty at its best. Its entire stock-in-trade consisted of a glass jar half full of red wafers on a shelf in the front window—a sort

* See Appendix (i).

of danger-signal, I suppose, to warn off people coming with doubtful intentions—and a paste-pot and brush on a counter. "He's a little 'un!" suggested George Christopher, eyeing me deprecatingly up and down with those fierce eyes of his, as though he were thinking I ought to be ashamed of myself for not being at least twice the size. "Little and good!" was the quiet remark of my conductor, who patted me on the head by way of encouragement. "Hope he'll keep good!" was the curt response, "and grow a trifle as soon as he can make it convenient!" Then suddenly inflating his cheeks he looked at me piercingly, as if he took me for an unblown bladder, and was longing to fill me with wind in order to make me look a little bigger. And by way of emphasising my littleness by comparison, the blower drew himself up to his full height, looked down at me critically, as though calculating how long it would take me to grow as big as he wanted me to be, and then measured my height with an umbrella he had in his hand, sagely remarking that the gingham had the advantage by a quarter of an inch. All this I took seriously at the time, but lived long enough to know that it was only my prospective proprietor's humour, and that no kinder heart ever beat in human breast than that of George Christopher Liebenrood. "He'll do," said he at last, with a jerk, as though it had taken time and much effort to arrive at a conclusion. "We'll try him—come along!" And, taking me playfully by the ear, he piloted me into a vast interior. "Here's a little printer's devil for you!" said he jocosely, to somebody somewhere inside, and then left me in the cavernous place to find out at my leisure where and to whom he had consigned me. It was at that moment, and in that way, my life's work began fifty-seven years ago.

Almost my first experience as a worker was disfigured by a political taint, and I had to suffer for it. As Home Secretary in the Melbourne Administration, Lord John Russell had been making a great speech on something or other in Parliament, and the news came too late for the *Courier* on the following morning. There were no Press

messages in those days—no electric telegraph—and the telephone was a miracle yet to be performed. The late news was brought by the evening papers from London, and the great speech made by Lord John Russell arrived at Leamington after the *Courier* had gone to press. It was decided to print a short digest of that speech, and to issue it as an "extra special," in order to impress the popular mind with the fact that journalistic enterprise was in full blast at the old south-west corner in Wise-street, and that there was still somebody to be found there who meant business. The leaflets that comprised this "extra special" were handed to me, with instructions to deliver a copy at every house and at every shop that came in my way, and that if there were none in the way I was to search diligently for them and bring them in the way. These specific instructions were given with so much earnestness by the important personage who had taken my length with his umbrella, and with so many aggressive inflations of the cheeks as if the longing to blow me up like a bladder were still unsatisfied, that I verily believed, if I were to miss a house, it would fall upon me and crush me, and that my only hope in life rested on my commission being conscientiously carried out. The extract, I remember, was from the *Globe*, and it began thus: "At four o'clock this morning Lord John Russell rose to move," &c. So I started on my mission, and in the proper discharge of my duty I rang bells and hammered away at knockers in the most reckless manner. I had seen and heard Bloomfield, the letter-carrier, do the same thing in the same way, and I deemed my new occupation at least equal in importance to Bloomfield's. So I rang and pounded from door to door, as if my mission in life was to wake the dead. "What's hup?" exclaimed a sudden apparition of drab, and plush, and hair powder, and white-stockinged calves, and highly polished pumps, answering one of the doors in Euston-place. I had hammered and rang twice, my first summons not having been attended to, and I should have banged away a third time, for I remembered the inflation of cheeks at the south-west corner, and the fear of being blown

up like a bladder was still before my eyes. My answer was to hand the apparition one of my political missives, as I had seen Bloomfield do. The revelation of plush and hair powder took it and began to read aloud: "At four o'clock this morning Lord John Russell rose to move!"——— Then came the fierce enquiry: "What's it matter to *me* what time Lord John Russell gets hup? Cut! Yer young scamp!" The kick he gave me sent me at a bound from the top of the stone steps to the bottom. That young man's interest in politics must have been limited.

CHAPTER XV

On the Staff—An Early Beginning—Jolly Nose the Bright Rubies—Tipping for Snuff—Watts for Beer—A Vanish Steak—On the Jeff—Our First Editor.

I CLAIM to be the first printer's devil regularly employed as such on the staff of the *Leamington Spa Courier* soon after its advent in 1828. Why do you smile? You are making merry over that word "staff," I expect. Of course you are. But why, pray tell me why, a printer's devil should not be considered as necessary and as useful a member of a newspaper staff as the editor himself is? It is only a question of degree, and the organ-blower who raises the wind is as much a necessity as the organist who lets that wind into the pipes and produces the melody. For several years, as far as I can make out, the paper managed to get on very well without its regular Diabolus. But the imps they got were only make-shifts. The *Courier* proprietary took to its typographical bosom several noviciates after the journal's first inception, selected with the greatest care and discretion from the very pink and flower of Leamside brain and muscle of the period, with whom it covenanted to teach them the whole art and mystery of type-setting. But these Caxtonian ovates were not printers' devils in the sense that I was, for there was never any such covenant with me, and my duties were those of typographical devildom pure and simple.

The first apprentice on the *Courier* was Edward Naul, son of Mr. William Naul, tailor, of 22, Clemens-street. Ned was never more at his best than when setting the fashion in dress at the Spa among the middle-class youth of the period. He was quite the Beau Brummel of his day, and to be considered *à la* Naul was high praise indeed. A

pair of bright eyes and a pretty face, at the Albion Hotel opposite, were once captured by Edward's irresistible attractions, and I think the mash was mutual. Mr. Thompson, the proprietor of the hotel—he was an elderly man and beyond such susceptibilities—always looked with horror at the furious ogling that was constantly going on between the boys at the *Courier* and the girls at the Albion, and complained about it at head-quarters. Naul was quite equal to the occasion. In order to acquire an accurate knowledge, as he went on with his work, as to whether the bright eyes at the Albion were bent upon him from a certain upper window on the other side of the street, he was wont to place a little pocket-mirror, artfully contrived, on his case by the side of his copy, and thus, while dishing the ever-watchful hotel proprietor, obtained the knowledge he required without appearing to be in search of it. I have a very vivid recollection of sharing a feast and witnessing a fuddle in Clemens-street on the outcoming of Naul from servitude and taking up the dignity of a journeyman printer. He left Leamington shortly afterwards, and went to Manchester, where he remained for many years, a splendid craftsman, and an honour to the printing profession. The first overseer of the *Courier*, in my recollection, was Willcox, the next Matthews, the third Clarke, the fourth Malcolm, the fifth Lewis, the sixth Hewitt, and their successors were Pendleton, Marratt, and Easton.

My introduction to the *Courier* took place as I have already described it, at a time when there was some doubt in the proprietary mind which was the tallest, myself or an umbrella. But I have not yet told you who it was that introduced me. It was Mr. Alfred Woodhouse, who personally conducted me from the Victoria School, of which he was manager—I think they called him the secretary in those days—and where I was long afterwards a pet Sunday-school teacher of his. I well remember trotting along by my patron's side, out from the school-house in Ranelagh-terrace, down Clemens-street, along High-street, and into the front office at the old north-west corner—a child not much more than eight or nine years of

age—with the great world of Work before me, and everything around me, which up to that moment had been so familiar, taking new shapes, and growing into things strange and striking—made so by the novelty of hopes and expectations inspired by the act of "leaving school" and "going to work." The school I had left was named after the young Princess who was then about to be crowned Queen of England, and was filled with an atmosphere of pleasant recollections that have always made it dear to me, and ever will. Mrs. Cooper, I remember, was schoolmistress in my early recollection, and on its roll of lady visitors were such names as the Viscountess Eastnor, Mrs. Bertie Percy, Dowager Lady Mordaunt, Lady Moncrieff, Mrs. Chandos Leigh, the Misses Parker, Mrs. Holbech, the Misses Manners Sutton, Mrs. Lucy, Mrs. H. C. Wise, Mrs. Jephson, Mrs. Galton, Mrs. Downes (wife of the Vicar), and others whose kindly and sympathetic features I well remember, but whose names I forget. Among the earlier Sunday-school teachers were Mr. Reeves and Miss Reeves, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Wayne, Miss Ross, Miss Chaplin, and others. The Sunday evenings were regularly spent by the teachers under the hospitable roof of Mr. Alfred Woodhouse in Bath-street, from which place, I remember, a mournful procession once started, ending in many tears round an open grave in the old burial-ground at the back of Satchwell-place, where the wife of the chief we loved had just gone to her long, long rest.

Nine o'clock of the years was an early hour in the day of life for me to begin work. But this was two generations ago, when the budding mind and growing muscle of humanity were not so tenderly cared for as they are now. And yet, looking back through all that long avenue of dead years, during which my hand has never strayed for many hours together from the tiller of mental and physical activity, I have no feeling but one of gratitude—no sentiment but that of affection—for the good, kind-hearted patron of my earliest days, who thus opened to me the door of life's labour on the threshold of the *Courier* Office at Leamington nearly 60 years ago.

I soon got accustomed to the new sphere of industry, and those who took part in it, both literary and mechanical. The overseer of the printing department was a stout burly-looking personage, with a raucous voice and a nose like a glorified raspberry. His constant anxiety about "copy" was only equalled by a consuming desire for beer and snuff. When fits took him in regard to the first of these, it was my duty to rush in hot haste over the way, across High-street, to a small house—one of two or three small houses leading off the Lower Avenue in the direction of the back of the Music Hall Here, Mr. Sharp, the elder, must have lived, and I remember being made to haunt that particular spot at all hours, to the peremptory order of the raucous voice, which varied the entertainment pretty frequently by despatching me on the one hand to Tipping's, in Bath-street, for pennyworths of highly-scented Scotch snuff, and on the other hand to "Johnny Watts's," of the Plasterers' Arms, was it—or the Bricklayers'—by the canal-side at the top of Wise-street—for half-pints of beer. There was an Irishman, too, who was similarly afflicted as to beer and snuff—and my devotion to these two particular worthies of the old typographical school absorbed nearly the whole of my time.

This Irishman—his intimates called him Paddy Coyle—was peculiar in the way he took snuff. He would scoop it out of a tin box with his setting-rule, deposit about half a tea-spoonful on the back of his hand, and snuff it up with gusto, as though his very existence depended on putting every atom of the fragrant dust out of sight with the greatest possible despatch. On one occasion, and on one only, did he ever vary the nature of my service in his behalf as to alternate supplies of beer and snuff. This was an order he once gave me to get him half a pound of beefsteak for his dinner. I got the steak at Welch's, and the attendant who supplied me—was it William, who served for years at that well-known place of business?—carefully and thoughtfully put the choice cut on a skewer for me; but while I was absorbed looking at the tarts in an adjoining

window—was it Benton's?—a hungry dog took a fancy to the dangling steak, skewer and all, and bolted with it. As a purveyor of butcher's meat I was thus voted a failure at the *Courier* office, and had to confine myself in future to beer, copy, and snuff.

Of these three, the surreptitious importation of beer was my chief responsibility. That responsibility began in earnest about a quarter to eleven every Monday morning. At this moment there was a wonderful concensus of opinion in the office as to the necessity of foregathering round the imposing stone. One of the foregatherers would begin by dashing several bits of metal called em-quads on to the stone, and the rest would eagerly count the nicks that came uppermost. This would go on in turn, till all had tried to show more nicks than his neighbour, and it ended with a gallon of ale from Watts's, which the lowest number of nicks had to pay for. This was known as "jeffing." I could never make out how this particular mode of gambling—special to the printing profession—got its name. The "gods," I remember ("gods" being the cant term given by the operators to the em-quads used in the operation), that were called into requisition at the *Courier* office, were battered nearly round by frequency of use, and there was occasionally a difficulty in deciding whether the fateful nick was uppermost or not. There seemed to be a strong element of superstition, too, mixed up with the transaction. One operator would wave his "gods" round three times in his hands with the sun before delivering them to the arbitrament of the imposing stone. Another would shake and wave them round in a contrary direction, settling the matter in his own mind by blowing into his hands three times before delivery. A third would shake up the "gods" nine times, blow once on the back of his hand, and then deliver them. Sometimes they were shaken high above the head; at other times close to the ground. Some would dash them on the stone as if in a fit of frenzy; others would quietly and stealthily empty them on as if they feared to hurt them. Excitement always prevailed, violent alter-

cations not infrequently followed—I have seen blows—and a deluge of beer was the natural outcome of it all. The mysterious rite invariably began about 11 o'clock each Monday morning, and ended about six in the evening, during which time communication between the *Courier* office and the beer-tap at Watts's was continuous. On Tuesday a hoarse demand for "copy" took the place of the arbitrament of the "gods" through the medium of the sacrificial stone, and my visits to Orchard-street were then as frequent as they had been to the canal side.*

The moving spirit of the *Courier*, from my first recollection of its inner working to the last, was Mr. James Sharp, the younger. I never heard him speak in my life—never saw him smile. He was always a mystery to me as a child—a problem to me as a man—with his hard thin face, that seemed specially designed for cleaving a way for its owner through obstacles that lay in his path—his gaunt figure, concentrated look, and strident movement that suggested impatience and impetuosity—and his eternal, sphinx-like silence, that had the effect of inducing silence wherever he went. When he brought copy to the office, he would lay it in front of the overseer without a word. If there was more to come he would beckon me with his finger, as he went out, and I would follow and fetch the further supply. He would hand it to me without a word, which I never looked for and never expected. He always reminded me of a man who had lost something valuable, and was breaking his heart over the loss. He attracted me first by the enormous quantities of type he would carry with his long, thin fingers, at a grasp, from one galley to another in the printing office in the course of making up. In my limited knowledge I had associated this feat with danger in the direction of "pye." For I had seen a shaky overseer—tremulous from drink—very often come to grief on attempting it with very small handfulls, and to see the editor himself grasp a quarter of a column as it were, between the thumbs and forefingers of each hand, and transfer it safely from one galley to another with-

* See appendix (*j*)

out dropping a letter, glorified him amazingly in my estimation, and I regarded him as a sort of supernatural being, capable of doing anything under the sun. It is quite 40 years since I saw him last, and I shall never see him again, but my recollection of him now is as vivid and as clear as it was when I saw him for the first time more than half-a-century ago, arranging the type in the printing office of the *Courier*, and carrying the matter about with impunity from galley to galley as though it were solid blocks of granite instead of innumerable atoms. He knew his business and was aware of it.

CHAPTER XVI.

Our Masonic Past—Growth of Freemasonry—Guy's Lodge—The Corner Stone—Hitchman, the Samaritan—Our Chie Letter-Carrier—A Human Nutcracker—The Last of the Beadles.

In Merridew's edition of Moncrieff's guide for 1830 appears an intimation that "a Masonic Lodge has been established at the Bedford Hotel in this town, and the meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Monday in every month." This was Guy's Lodge, No. 395, of Free and Accepted Masons, named after the famous Guy, Earl of Warwick, and founded in 1829. Its first place of meeting was at the Bedford, but in the records I find that, in 1833, its members foregathered at the Crown Hotel. The Lodge now has its meetings at Victoria House, Holly Walk. Freemasonry has grown with the years in Warwickshire during the last half-century. In 1829, when Guy's was founded, there were only six Masonic Lodges in the county. There are now 28. Those in 1829 were Guy's at Leamington, the Shakespeare at Warwick, Trinity at Coventry, the Apollo at Alcester, and the St. Paul's and Athol Lodges at Birmingham. The Shakespeare at Warwick can claim the distinction of being a Centenary Lodge. It was founded in 1792, and numbers 284 on the Grand Lodge of England, but it was originally a military Lodge and was formed at Ipswich. Trinity at Coventry is also a Centenary Lodge, founded in 1785, numbers 254 on the roll, and holds its meetings at the Craven Arms Hotel. Both the St. Paul's and Athol Lodges at Birmingham have also the distinctive privilege of wearing a centenary jewel, the former having been founded in 1733, and the latter in 1760. The Apollo, at Alcester, acquired the privilege this year (1894) of becoming a Centenary Lodge, having been founded in 1794. It numbers 301 on the roll

of Grand Lodge, and holds its meetings at the Town Hall. Since 1829 a second Warwick Lodge, the Unity, No. 567, founded in 1849, and holding its meetings at the Woolpack Hotel, has been added to the list; also the Stoneleigh, No. 725, founded in 1857, and the St. Michael's, No. 1,630, founded in 1876, both at Coventry, and both holding their meetings at the Queen's Hotel; the Swan of Avon, No. 2,133, founded in 1886, at Stratford-on-Avon, holding its meetings at the Union Club, the St. Alphege, No. 1,431, founded in 1873, at Solihull, holdings its meetings at the George Hotel; the Machen, No. 1782, founded in 1878, at Coleshill; the Athelstan, No. 1,333, founded in 1870, at Atherstone; the Rectitude, No. 502, founded in 1844, at Rugby; and at Birmingham the following:—Light, founded in 1840, Faithful in 1841, Howe in 1851, Temperance in 1858, Leigh in 1861, Bedford in 1862, Grosvenor in 1862, Elkington in 1864, Fletcher in 1864, Emulation in 1867, Forward in 1867, Israel in 1873, Charity in 1875, and Alma Mater in 1876.

The first public demonstration made by Guy's Lodge after its consecration in 1829 was historical. It was at the laying of the foundation stone of the Warneford Hospital. This ceremony took place on Tuesday, the 10th of April, 1832, and was performed with full Masonic honours, in which the Leamington, Warwick, and Coventry Lodges took part, assembled under the banner of Guy's. There was a peculiar fitness in this association of Freemasonry with the great and good Samaritan movement with which it was made to identify itself at the call of the then youngest Lodge in the Province, from the interesting historical fact that the Worshipful Master of Guy's for that particular year was Dr. Henry Jephson, to whom and to whose fellow-labourers in the medical profession the town had to look for gratuitous service to the new Samaritan undertaking—services that had been, in the past, and were afterwards, performed with such splendid results in the amelioration of human suffering. On the 6th of April the following advertisement appeared in the *Courier*, by order of the Right Worshipful the Deputy Provincial Grand Master for Warwickshire, dated from Guy's

Lodge: "All the members of the craft are most earnestly requested to attend a special meeting of Emergency at the Bedford Hotel, at 12 o'clock on Tuesday next. The Brethren are expected to appear in full Masonic costume for the purpose of walking in procession on a very important occasion." Here let me mention, *en passant*, that, 25 years later. the then proprietor of the paper, in which this call to Masonic duty appeared, was doing good service to Freemasonry by warm personal interest taken in the craft, and to the cause of charity by reason of his connection with the Press, which is ever found loyally foremost in pleading for the afflicted. This was Mr. Joseph Glover, to whom has to be accorded the rare distinction of having twice filled the chair at Guy's in 1857-58, and who is now, in 1894, both father and treasurer of his Lodge.

Well, the "important occasion" referred to in the notice that appeared in the *Courier* was that of laying the foundation stone of the Warneford Hospital, the site as then explained, being "a short distance from the town and fronting, the London-road." The Deputy Provincial Grand Master was Bro. N. L Torre, whose portrait now graces the walls of Guy's Lodge. As might have been expected, there was a large and brilliant gathering of Freemasons to do justice to the ceremony, brethren from all parts of the province being present. The Worshipful Master of Guy's Lodge, as I have said, was Dr. Jephson, the Wardens being Brothers Gomm and Samuels (Bro. Gomm was the proprietor of the Bedford Hotel), and the Deacons Brothers Green and Watkin. Past-Masters Dilworth and Watson making up the executive representation. Among other Brethren from Guy's, the Shakespeare, and other Lodges, were Brothers Garrett, S.W.; Stanley, J.W.; Stott, P.M.; Nicks, P.M.; Green, P.M; Crump, S D.; Edward Foden, J.D., Rose, Watts, Onions, Jackson, Squires, Hooper, Randall, Haywood, Jones, Parsons, Woodward, Golby, Johnson, and many others, members of the craft. "The procession," says the chronicler, "was ably marshalled by Bro. Crump," and that "in the evening some 50 brethren sat down to a banquet at the Bedford

Hotel, when Dr. Jephson, supported by several Masonic Brethren of distinction, presided." We are not left to speculate much as to the meed of enjoyment that fell to the lot of the banqueters, for the chronicler, with a completeness of detail which does him credit, is quaintly careful to tell us that "the circling glass had not performed its last revolution till a late hour!"

Appended to the printed notices of the new Hospital in 1832 was the name of "John Hitchman, honorary secretary." Dr. Hitchman was a medical practitioner of high repute in my early days, and Leamington owes him much, not only for inestimable services rendered through the medium of his profession, but for his especial thoughtfulness for the poor through a long series of years. He started a fund for giving employment to local industry, and used it for beautifying the town in planting trees, particularly in the Tachbrook-road and Radford-road, and in embellishing the Spa in other ways. His liberality to the poor was unbounded. "I'll send you something that will do you more good than physic" was a common formula of his, and an order at the nearest butcher's shop would be the sequel. In 1830 the doctor lived in Clemens-street, in 1833 in High-street (Westbourne-place, second house from Bath-place), and later on in Lansdowne-place (now the east side of the Upper Parade, above Warwick-street). He founded a hydropathic establishment, and did loyal service to the Spa through a long and useful life.

And while these things were going on, the town was making rapid strides in material progress and prosperity. In April, 1832, the chronicler tells us that "that splendid pile of buildings, Waterloo-place, is being extended, both at its eastern and western extremity. A new crescent (Clarendon-place, only two houses of which were built—Somerset House and York House), is in course of erection nearly poposite Dr. Jephson's princely mansion; Beech Lawn, and a row of elegant buildings to be called Newbold-terrace, opposite the Royal Pump Room, is in contemplation." Then Mr. S. Bettison, who had taken the Paragon Library of the late Mr. Bissett

in High-street and called it by the more classic title of the Minerva Library, gave notice that he had "been induced to build another establishment at No. 6, Upper Parade, on the most extensive and splendid scale, calling it the Athenæum." To this new building the life-size statue of Minerva that surmounted the Paragon was transferred, and the Athenæum was opened with a grand dress ball, in honour of his Majesty's birthday, on Monday, May the 28th, 1832, at which ball "C. B. Heathcote, Esq., town master of the ceremonies, has kindly consented to officiate." The Athenæum, the erection of which marked the progress then being made in the building on the west side of the Upper Parade, became the New Town post-office, and the letter-box, I remember, was an enlarged representation of the head of the Lion of St. Mark, whose open mouth received letters complacently up to the last moment of despatch, but closed with a bang when the regulation time had expired. The site of the Athenæum is now the Bedford Stores.

The general postal conditions had by this time altered considerably from what they were in Satchwell's day. A guide of 1830 says: "Since our last guide was issued from the Press, Leamington has been constituted a post town, and the new post-office is established at Mr. Bevington's, hatter and hosier, No. 36, Bath-street, a situation admirably adapted for so public an office." In 1833 the postal premises at No. 36 were occupied by Beasley and Jones, chemists, but Mr. Bevington was still the postmaster. Isaac Bloomfield was letter-carrier for the New Town in the same year, and Samuel Hunt for the Old Town. Three years later, owing to the rapid growth of the New Town, a second letter-carrier had to be employed, and George Abbotts, who lived in Brook-street, was put on to assist Bloomfield.*

When Isaac Bloomfield was first appointed, in 1817, it was part of his duty to fetch the letters from Warwick, which was then the nearest post-town. He was the only letter-carrier at the Spa for years. As the New Town began to develop an official was engaged by the post-office to go round

*See appendix (*k*).

in the evening with a bell, collecting letters. Joseph Malland was the first who was thus employed, in 1835, and I well remember the solemn tinkle of his bell the first round he made, as he perambulated the outskirts of the upper part of the town, followed by myself and two or three more little ones, to whom the apparition was a novelty. I have a very distinct remembrance of my early impression as to the duty Malland had to perform. I thought he was a new town crier, and I began by following him up out of curiosity to know what he was going to cry about, but as he kept on ringing his bell, and never cried, I gradually dropped off, wondering why he rang his bell and never stopped to say anything.

From Bevington's, 36, Bath-street (where Maycock's now is) the post-office was removed to No. 31, which is now occupied by the Gas-fitting Company. It formed part of the business premises kept by Messrs. Enoch and Sons, boot and shoemakers, Mr. Edward Enoch being the postmaster. This was within two doors of the north-east corner of Regent-place, Mr. Page, hairdresser, occupying No. 32, and Messrs. Nelson and Herring, chemists and druggists, No. 33. The letters were posted through a slit in the window, and a small wicket, about nine inches square, opening on to the street, served for communication with the outer world. It was here my first letter was posted under the penny postage system The penny and the letter were given to me, and I felt I had discharged my duty, when, instead of knocking at the wicket, buying a stamp, and sticking it on the letter, I put the copper in the fold of the envelope and dropped letter and penny into the box.

In course of time, as the postal necessities developed themselves, the post-office was removed to No. 29, occupied in 1827 by Miss Lloyd, but now No. 41, and in the occupation of Mr. Bennett. Shortly afterwards what is now No. 43 was taken in, and the portico was erected in front of the two houses. On March 19th, 1870, the post-office was removed to its present site, near the bridge, and on February 4th, 1871, Mr. Enoch resigned, after 36 years' service. He was succeeded by Mr.

Adams, who was followed by Mr. Clarke, in 1892. The postal and telegraph staff now consists of 23 clerks and assistants, 1 inspector, 37 postmen and auxiliary postmen, 14 telegraph messengers, and 7 rural auxiliary postmen; total, 82. The number of letters posted during the past year was 2,625,048; book packets, 393,066; newspapers, 240,732; post-cards, 387,342; parcels, 93,938; samples, 1,100; telegrams forwarded, 38,405; telegrams transmitted, 44,854; number of letters delivered during the past year, 2,478,276; book packets, 863,811; newspapers, 232,489; post cards, 331,542; parcels, 99,640; samples, 3,500; telegrams received, 56,418. In 1817, when Isaac Bloomfield was appointed letter-carrier, a score of letters in a day were considered a heavy delivery.

In 1828 Lord Aylesford revived the ancient Court Leet, in connection with his manorial rights, and I think the last parochial officer partly appointed in accordance with the requirements of this ancient Court died in my remembrance of him. This was Thomas Ivens, known as the head-borough, or parish beadle. In 1826 this office was held by Abraham North, at which time Ivens was ban-beggar, his duty being to warn "vagrom people" away from the village and to "whip rogues and vagabonds." On the death of North, Thomas Ivens was promoted to the vacant post as head-borough, and had for his assistant one Thomas Stanton, at whose death Ivens became the sole representative of the ancient office. I remember him very well indeed, and fancy I see him now, in the mellow light of his departing glory, as the last of the old Leamington village beadles. One section of his parochial duties was to convey the lads from the National schoolhouse to church on Sundays, and keep them in order when he got them there. He was an old man, shaky and infirm in later life, but was made resplendent with the aid of a gold band to his polished bell-topper, scarlet collar and cuffs to his blue frock coat, velveteen knee-breeches, white stockings, and buckle-shoes. His love of order among boys was emphasised by means of a long stick with a knob at one end, frequent contact of

boyish craniums with which, during divine service at church, might very well have been taken for someone busily engaged cracking cocoa-nuts. With the death of Ivens this parochial system of nut-cracking happily passed away for ever.

CHAPTER XVII.

Local Talent—Honours Divided—Early Printers—An Ideal Manager—A Typical Manageress—The Anthenæum—A Famous Old Town Club—Milverton Episcopal Chapel—Evanished.

WITH the gradual growth of the village to a township, the passion for distinctive rights and privileges began to assert itself. In 1833 was published "Fairfax's new guide to Leamington Spa and its environs, by John Fairfax." In a preface dated from 10, Gloucester-street, August, 1833, and initialled "J. F.," the writer announces, as a special recommendation, that the guide is "the first guide-book even printed and published by a resident." Up to that time the publishers of guides for the village, now rapidly growing into a town, hailed from Birmingham, Coventry, Warwick, and Southam. Several editions of Pratt's guides of 1812 and 1814 had been issued; Bissett had written one in 1814, with a second edition in 1816; Sharpe's, of Warwick, came out in 1817; Moncrieff's in 1822; Smith's, of Southam, in 1826; and several editions of Moncrieff, by Merridew, up to 1833; but none of them were actually printed and published in the town. Fairfax's guide of 1833 was, consequently, "the first guide-book to Leamington ever printed and published by a resident." There can be little doubt, also, on the same residential principle, that Mr. Fairfax was the first master-printer who started in business at the Spa. His first place of business has been shown by a correspondent to have been at the corner of what was at that time known as Printers'-street, now called West-street, leading out of the upper part of Clemens-street to the west, and that it was from this fact Printers'-street originally took its name. A second claim has been put in for the honour of having been the first master-printer in Leamington. In

CLEMENS STREET AND BLENHEIM HOTEL, 1822

the *Courier* of February 17th, 1894, appeared a letter signed "Elizabeth Foden, of Kenilworth, daughter of the late Mr. Edward Foden," claiming that her father, in 1818, established the first printing office at the Spa, and that this office was "over the Apollo Vaults in Clemens-street," and, further, that the words, "Established 1818," were always printed on her father's bill-heads. I knew Mr. Foden well, and I know he always insisted on his business being the "original printing establishment." So did Mr. John Fairfax, for in Moncrieff's Guide of 1830, when Mr. Fairfax first went to reside at No. 10, Gloucester-street, appears an advertisement (a leaflet, bearing Mr. Fairfax's imprint, and inserted at the end of the Guide), in which he describes his business as "The original printing establishment, removed from Clemens-street." It is quite certain there could hardly have been two originals, unless they both began at the same time, which is unlikely, and I must leave the point to be settled by posterity, only remembering that Mr. W. G. Perry, of Warwick, occupied the room "over the Apollo Vaults" in 1818, and was himself a printer. My earliest recollection of Mr. Foden at Leamington was at 37, Regent-street, in 1833 or 1834. He does not appear in the Directory at all in 1830, and in 1827 I find him described as being in business at Warwick. My earliest recollection of Mr. John Fairfax was at No. 10, Gloucester-street, then at 37, Bath-street. Another of the earliest Leamington printers was Mr. Bloomfield, who, I think, was a Nonconformist minister. Mr. Bloomfield's business, which was carried on at No 12, Gloucester-street, passed into the hands of Mr. Arthur Youngman about the year 1838, who continued it at the same place, extending it over the adjoining wine and spirit stores, then occupied by Mr. Stafford, who was previously in business in Bath-street, and subsequently in Victoria-terrace. About 1847, Mr. Youngman disposed of his printing business to Ashley and Howitt, who hailed from Windsor, Mr. Ashley being, I think, Postmaster there at the time. Mr. Youngman left Leamington, shortly afterwards, to take an appointment on the *Melbourne Argus*, where he died. Ashley and Howitt

disposed of the business to Mr. Macminn, and it was afterwards purchased by Messrs. Taylor, Glover, and Co., subsequently forming part of the plant acquired by Mr. Joseph Glover when he purchased the *Courier* in 1854. Other of the early printers at the Spa were John and Henry Merridew, who, having businesses at Warwick and Coventry, were first established in Clemens-street, then on the Lower-parade; Mr. Brierly, chemist, who had his printing office in Regent-street, then in Clemens-street; Mr. John Beck, Regent-street, afterwards Upper Parade; Mr. Richard Russell, whose place of business was in Spencer-street, forming part of the premises of the Bath Hotel, then kept by his eldest brother, Mr. John Russell; Mr. Dark, Warwick-street, afterwards Upper Parade; and Mr. Nathaniel Merridew, cashier at one of the banks, an amateur printer, whose tasteful and artistic work attracted attention. Mr. Richard Russell started the *Leamington Iris*, but its life was short.

Fairfax's guide gives us a glimpse of what was being done at the Spa about that time, and who were engaged in doing it. The old Well, in 1833, was under the care of Mr. Squiers, who kept the Old Spa Boarding House, at the corner of Church-walk, where the *Courier* offices now are. Mr. and Mrs. Curtis were at Wise's baths, at the south-west corner of Bath-street. Read's baths, next to the Crown Hotel, were now Lee's baths. Mr. Read, the founder of these baths in 1806, was a Baptist minister of Warwick. Mr. and Mrs. Wincote, we are told, "have now the management of the Pump Room." The immediate surroundings of the Pump Room were very different then from what they are now. In those days a line of plain iron railings shut off the structure and grounds from the public pavement, extending from the foot of the bridge to the corner of Dormer-place, and it was treason for a non-subscriber to be inside the sacred line. I have no doubt that where these palings stood was originally a rustic hedge, corresponding with the one I remember in existence opposite. My memory carries me back to a very tall, spare figure, white-haired, pale and thin—wearing a pink-

striped cotton jacket and vest of the same pattern, both always spotlessly clean—closely-shaven face, cotton-print neckerchief, widely padded, encircling an amplitude of white shirt-collar in which the head lay embedded—*à lá* William Ewart Gladstone of the present Parliamentary day—drab knee breeches, white stockings, and low shoes always highly polished. It was a striking figure, bright and spotless from feet to forehead, and it used to perambulate the Pump Room Gardens with stately step, sometimes drawing a small garden-roller, as if for amusement, leisurely and stately, over the wide and smooth gravel walk in front of the Colonnade. This was Mr. Wincote, who, with his wife, had charge of the Pump Room in those days. The duty of the latter—who was quite the antithesis of her husband in physical appearance, being ruddy and stout—was to dispense the healing waters to visitors inside. I think I see this good lady now, standing within an enclosure railed off at one end of the Pump Room, catching glasses-full of the natural medicated water from a constantly - running ornamental fount, and handing the sparkling liquid to those who were searching for health in the crystal cup. The features of the servitor were benevolence itself, and they were surrounded with a sort of halo, imparted by the quaint wide pleated frill that was a characteristic of the head-gear worn in those days. A snowy neckerchief pinned closely around the throat, a light cotton-print dress of the neatest of patterns, spotlessly clean and glossy from the careful application of starch and flat-iron, with apron of snow in front—these made up the handsome and homely figure I remember in the Pump Room at Leamington in the early days—a figure that has crystallised itself in my memory as something historic in the local annals of the Royal Spa.

In this guide of 1833 we are told that "the old Spa boarding-house at the corner of Church-walk commands delightful views of the New Town," and the New Town by this time was getting to be a thing of beauty destined to be a joy for ever. Bettison's Athenæum Library in the Upper Parade

added greatly to the effect of that line of buildings. It represented four massive pillars of the order of the Portico of Philip in the Isle of Delos, surmounted by a full-length figure of Minerva, on each side of which were busts of Byron and Scott. Mr. Fairfax pays a deserved tribute to James Bissett, who only died the year before, from whose small beginning in the Apollo Rooms, Clemens-street, as the first promoter of art and literature at the village Spa in the years gone by, this classic Athenæum of the Upper Parade sprang. The guide further tells us, as an historic item of local sanitation, that Mr. Thomas Oldham, of the old mill, "has just laid down pipes in the principal streets to supply the Old Town with beautiful fresh spring water,"* that "a convent on a most extensive scale is now being erected at Princethorpe, at a cost of £20,000"; that "proposals have been issued for building a new Theatre, by subscription, in Warwick-street, at a cost of £6,000;" that the Leamington Club, at the corner of Church-walk, opened on the 25th of November, with Lord Eastnor, Sir Edward Mostyn, Bart., Sir James Ramsay, Bart., Sir Daniel Bailey, Colonel O'Halloran, Captain Somerville, R.N., Captain Barrett, Captain Bradley, Dr. Jephson, Dr. Hitchman, and many other of the *elite* of the town, as members, and that "Mr. Squiers is the highly-capable steward of the club."

During this year of 1833 the Milverton Episcopal Chapel was erected, "on the brow of Milverton-hill, near the residence of Lord Eastnor." The residence of Lord Eastnor was at the foot of the hill, the Episcopal Chapel at the top. The Rev. A. B. Campbell was the first incumbent, one Price the first clerk, Lawrence the first bell-ringer, Mr. Clarke, who was blind, the first organist, followed by Mr. Elstone, son of Mr. C. Elstone, print and music-seller; the first group of choristers being Nicholls, Packwood, Barr, Manning, Hitchman, and another or two whose names I forget. The building was a bold, handsome-looking structure, of the Grecian order of architecture, from a design by Mr. Jackson, a well-known local architect. The

* See appendix (*l*).

Rev. H. Smith succeeded Mr. Campbell as incumbent. About the year 1884 the building was taken down, and the stretch of green fields, in the centre of which it stood alone for years in its pride of place, is now a delightful suburb covered with charming and attractive residences. This eventful year also saw the tomb erected of the well-known actor, Mr. Elliston, bearing an epitaph written by his son-in-law, Mr. Nicholas Lee Torre; and Mr. Elliston's son was in posession as organist at the old Parish Church, of which the Rev. Robert Downes was then the Vicar.

In 1832, an original source of what subsequently became a great business at Leamington began to develop itself from a small beginning. On the 27th of November, in the year named, an advertisement appeared in the *Courier*, to the effect that "Francis Mulliner has purchased Radford Cottage, and intends to carry on the coach-building business, and hopes to introduce improved taste and fashion, in conjunction with his very extensive manufactory at North ampton. All orders left at the bar of the Bath Hotel, Leamington, or at Hewett's Library, will be punctually attended to." At that time the guides give four coachbuilders in business in the town—namely, Reeves, Church-street; Mash Regent-street; Taylor, Regent-grove; and Deeley, Clarendon-street. Three years later Michael Copps was added to the list. A change in another business, that subsequently grew to large dimensions, was recorded about this time at Warwick. On February 7th, 1835, it was announced that "J. M. Lamb retires from his old-established hat manufactory, and John Mollady enters upon the business." Mollady's hat manufactory at Warwick developed into one of the staple industries of the borough, and it was one of the *employés* there, named Dyke, who started the first hat club at Leamington. I remember another of the workers there, named Hunter, whose striking resemblance to O'Connell, the Irish Liberator, was the subject of general comment. And the fact that he was himself an Irishman, a scholar, and a wit, heightened the illusion. "Faith," said he once to a fellow trader in the boot and shoe line named

Tims, who was complaining of slackness of trade, "It's meself that have the greater cause of complaint, for are ye not makin' two boots to my one hat? Be satisfied, man!" In 1830, there were 23 boot and shoe makers in Leamington. By 1833, the list had swollen to 37. When Artemus Ward, the American humorist, visited the town some seven years later, he wrote a series of letters to *Punch*. In one of them, he said he was convinced the Queen must wear out a great quantity of shoe-leather for he found almost every other maker of boots in Leamington boot-maker by appointment to her Majesty. In those days, the peace of the village was not difficult to keep. Besides the parish beadle, two constables were appointed by the parochial authorities. In 1829, these were Henry Tipping and Robert Mousley, one Thomas Penn being special constable, pinner, and town crier. The "police-officer,"—what we should now call the Superintendent—who, in 1832, was at the head of this vast army of two constables and a special, was Thomas Ford, who was succeeded by William Shirley Roby, when the new police regulations under Peel's Act came into operation. I remember Ford, and I remember Roby. When the change came, it was a leap from the lamb to the lion!

CHAPTER XVIII.

Early Coaching at the Spa—The Rival Houses—Fly Boats and Fly Waggons—Sedan Chairmen in Clover—Our First Vet—Victualling—The Tantivy Trot—A Crack Whip.

THE history of coaching at the Spa forms one of the most interesting features in the annals of Warwickshire. The village of Leamington, in 1812, was just beginning to attract the attention of the outer world. In those days, with a population of 543, all told, very little coaching accommodation would suffice. Five hundred and forty-three! Let the burly giant of the present day take a peep through the curtains, and see what a small affair he once was in the world's economy! In his infancy, and for his convenience, there was a daily coach from Birmingham to Warwick and Leamington and back, likewise a coach three times a week, which passed through Leamington to Banbury for London, calling, of course, at our quaint little Bowling Green Inn, that stood by the wayside in the High-street, embowered in trees, with its old-world horse-trough, and swing sign, and general cosy attractiveness, that caused the traveller to be delighted to make its acquaintance and loth to leave it after acquaintance had been made. To go through Leamington then was simply to pass along the High-street, getting a glimpse of the village church and a thatched cottage or two as you passed. The Royal Mail from London arrived at the Spa every day about noon, the guard waking the Leamside echoes with his twanging horn, as the coach rattled up to the Bowling Green, and with a show of patronising pomp and circumstance which no other object in the world so well knew how to assume as did a well-appointed four-in-hand Royal Mail coach of the olden time, driven by a dragsman who had a proper meed of respect

for himself and for the peerless picture entrusted to his care. This fanfaronade was repeated at two o'clock, near the little thatched Post-office at the top of Mill-street, from which point the mail started to continue its work. A coach also ran daily from Coventry to Leamington and back. The proprietors—they must have been enterprising to have attempted it on a population of 543, all told!—were Messrs. Amos Packwood and W. Perry. I well remember Mr. Packwood in after years, when coaching for profit was beginning to look like a lost industry. He was then in business as a grocer at Binswood, which rural spot as yet formed but the outer fringe or distant colony of the Spa.

With the advent of Michael Copps, in 1814, coaching at Leamington began to wear a new and more important aspect. The old Dog Inn, with its modern additions, became the centre of traveling life for the village. The chronicler of 1816 tells us that "the Cossack, a new coach, now runs from Warwick to Leamington and back three times a day—fare 1s." Also that "the Crown Prince sets off from Copps's Royal Hotel every morning at a quarter past seven o'clock, passes through Southam, Stony Stratford, Dunstable, and St. Alban's, and arrives at the Belle Sauvage, Ludgate-hill, London, about nine o'clock the same night." Also that "a coach sets off from Smith's, Bath Hotel, by way of Coventry, at a quarter past 12, at noon, and arrives in London at seven next morning." A coach to Birmingham left Copps's at half-past six every morning, arriving at the Castle Inn, Birmingham, at half-past nine. Another coach left Copps's for the same destination at three in the afternoon. The spirit of enterprise thus shown at the Old Dog Inn—then called the Royal—soon put the Bath on its metal, and in 1816, I find "The new Telegraph post coach leaves the Bath Hotel for Birmingham every morning at half-past seven." Of this coach Thomas Sowley was the driver, and he lived at 5, Packington-place. "Coaches to Nottingham and Derby, to Coventry, Leicester, Manchester and Liverpool, Shrewsbury, Chester and Holyhead, and all parts of the North," were at once announced as "running every morning from the

Bath Hotel." To this fierce cannonade the Royal responded by putting on the Star, "a new coach, from Copps's, three times a-week," which "goes through Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon, Alcester, and Evesham, to the Plough Hotel, Cheltenham, were it arrives at two o'clock to dinner—thence through Stroud and Rodborough to the York House, Bath, where it arrives at nine the same evening—leaves Bath the following morning at 6-30, and arrives at Copps's at nine in the evening.' By the clinching way in which this was announced, I should think it must have been considered at "Copps's corner" as rather a large order, which would take a lot of circumventing, but with the view of making short work of the opposition, it was still further augumented by another coach, which "sets off from Copps's for Oxford, about 12 every day." Such was the state of things as to coaches in 1816.

For the further accommodation of travellers and traders in the same year, we are told that "Judd's fly-waggons, to and from London, arrive at Warwick on their way to Birmingham, goods and passengers for Leamington being forwarded from Warwick as soon as the waggons are unloaded. Goods by Pickford's fly-boats were brought to the village per Warwick and Napton canal, and were "received at Leamington at Hiron's wharf." Locomotion at the Spa at this date was primitive. Sedan chairs were "kept by Brown and Grant, at Read's baths, High-street," the terms being as follows:—From Copps's Hotel to the Assembly Rooms, 2s.; to the Pump Room, 1s. 6d.; to the Theatre, 1s. 6d. From the Bedford Hotel to the Theatre, 2s.; and to the other two places, 1s. 6d. From the Bath Hotel to the Assembly Rooms, 2s.; and to the Pump Room, 1s. Hudson's accommodation car ran this year daily from the Black Swan Inn, Warwick, to the Pump Room at Leamington. Smith and Tims's car also goes to and fro daily, as do John Taylor's and R. Gold's, the former starting from Castle-street, Warwick, and the latter from Wall-dyke. This influx of the stable interest into the Spa and county town naturally necessitated provision for the health of the horses, and we consequently find it announced

in 1816 that "there is a veterinary infirmary and shoeing forge opened at Stanley's, Castle-street, Warwick, where Mr. Palfrey, of Chapel Fields, near Coventry, veterinary surgeon, attends twice a week." For the information of the peripatetic, it is made known that "there is now a public coffee-room at Copps's Royal Hotel." This public coffee-room was the identical old Dog Inn itself, at the east end of the hotel buildings, set apart for that especial purpose, and it is so portrayed in old prints, being entered from the high road, and with "Coffee-room" painted over the entrance. Posting is announced at "Williams's Bedford Mews, Copps's Royal Hotel, and the Bath Hotel stables, were saddle-horses can be had." The hotels and inns at this period were the Bowling Green, the Royal, the Bath, the Crown, and the Blenheim; the "Angel in Cross-street, New Town"; the "Golden Lion, in Cross-street"; the "Half Moon, in Satchwell-street, the Red Lion, and the White Swan." Mr. Joseph Stanley was at the Crown, Mrs. Shaw at the Bowling Green, Mrs. Smith at the Bath, T. Rackstrow at the Blenheim, and J. Williams at the Bedford. A year or two afterwards, the Bedford was kept by J. Cross, the Angel by Ann Ballard, succeeded by her daughter, the Golden Lion by T. Smith, and the Half Moon by T. Pearce. The proprietor of the "Public Brewery, Clemens-street," in 1816, was T. Paris. There were then "porter vaults under the Assembly Rooms, Union Parade, kept by C. Byrn, orders received at No. 8, Union Parade Cottage." The beverage sold here was "London porter from the brewery of Felix, Calvert, and Co." There was also "London and country porter sold by J. Broomhall, at his Vaults, under Perry's Museum, Apollo Rooms, Clemens-street." Some 10 or 12 years afterwards, I find the houses of accommodation for the travelling public increased by the addition of the New Bowling Green, Church-street, first opened by E. Woodfield, maltster, Wise-street, afterwards kept by J. Burridge, and still later changing its name to the Guernsey Hotel, when it was kept by Charles Liebenrood, a son of Mr. G. C. Liebenrood. The new Bowling Green Inn in Church-street was

often mistaken by visitors for the old Bowling Green Inn, of early local history. The latter, however, was situated on the opposite side of Church-street, facing the high way.

Between the years 1816 and 1836 there were something like 60 inns added to the list as public victuallers. Among the more early were the Coventry Arms, Regent-street, kept by J. Hickling; the George Inn, High-street, kept by Catherine Powell; the King's Arms, Warwick-street, by Richard Dee; the Newmarket Inn, Tavistock-street, by J. Coults; the Coach and Horses, by J. Littlewood; the Ranelagh Tavern, by W. Davies; the Royal Oak, by John Mills; the Warwick Tavern, by William Batchelor; the Woodman, Bedford-street, by Walter Aston, afterwards by W. Beamish; the Wellington Tavern, by T. Bailey; the Binswood Tavern, by T. Hall; the Castle Inn, Brunswick-street, by J. Baker, afterwards by his widow, then by W. Herbert; the Clarendon Tavern, by R. Pratt; the Guy Tavern, by T. Phillips; the Stamford Arms, Binswood, by J. Hanson; and the Star and Garter, by W. D. Davies, afterwards by T. Oliver. Some idea may thus be formed of the great and rapid growth of the Spa, as shown by the increase of houses licensed for public victualling, and in the marked increase in hotel accommodation for visitors between 1816 and 1836. In 1826 an additional coach, called the Royal Pilot, to Cheltenham, Bath, and Bristol, began running from Copps's, the proprietors being Amos Packwood, Michael Copps, and Haines and Co. On the 25th of July, in the same year, the Eclipse was started, guaranteeing the run from Leamington to London in 10 hours. Messrs. Waddell, Copps, and Waterhouse were the proprietors. In 1832 the Imperial, from Leamington to Cheltenham, began running from the Bedford Hotel, which had recently changed proprietors. Mr. Gomm, who was a second Michael Copps as to coaching, had charge of the Bedford reins, and he wasevidently bent on showing what could be done in the way of pace and quality. In 1833 the Nimrod, from Leamington to London, started from the Bedford, the proprietors being Messrs. Gomm and Gilbert, who guaran-

teed by public notice that the distance from the Royal Spa to the Metropolis should be run in "less than 10 hours!" This was meant to be read with interest at "Copps's corner," as well as at the Bath. In the same year the Celerity was added to the Bedford list of coaches, together with the famous Birmingham coach Tantivy, which it was announced was to beat the record in running. The proprietor of the Tantivy was Mr. Richard Hawkes, of Warwick, and Cracknell, a well-known whip, was the driver. The turn-out was said to be one of the smartest in Warwickshire — a statement which, at that time, meant a great deal, and was intended as no slight praise. It was for Cracknell that the late Mr. Egerton Warburton, a well-known Cheshire squire, wrote a rattling song, "The Tantivy Trot," and the Tantivy was the Birmingham coach that began running from the Bedford Hotel, at Leamington, in 1833. Here is the first verse of the song:—

Here's to the old ones of four-in-hand fame—
Harrison, Peyton, and Ward, Sir;
Here's to the past ones that after them came,
Ford and the Lancashire Lord, Sir.
Let the steam pot
Hiss till it's hot.
Give me the speed of the Tantivy Trot.

It is reported of Cracknell that he once drove his team, at a sitting, a distance of 125 miles, to which Mr. Egerton Warburton refers in his song when he says: "Here's to the Cracknell that cracks them along, five 20 times at a go, Sir." Forty years after that song was written I came across a coach-guard named Cracknell, who was then engaged on a coach running between Llandrindod Wells—the Leamington of South Wales—and Kington, in Herefordshire, for the late Captain Cecil Otway, of the Grove, Presteign, a prominent member of the Road Club. I am inclined to think this Cracknell was a son of Cracknell's the driver of the Tantivy between Leamington and Birmingham in 1833. He was an old roadster, and spoke of his having once, for a wager, when he was on the stage-coach between Tunbridge and Tunbridge-Wells, "changed horses in one minute." He knew old Tustin, who "drove the last legitimate mail

coach in the United Kingdom from Aberystwith to Shrewsbury," and "little Johnny Rea who was guard of it." Daddy Hinde, who drove the Alert in and out of Brighton, was another rare old piece of coaching antiquity he knew. He grew enthusiastic over the Duke of Beaufort's trumpeting powers. "Talk about blowing the horn," said he; "the finest blower we have in the world is the Duke of Beaufort." Colonel Corbett he spoke of as a friend of his who "ran in one of the coaches the identical horse rode by the late Sir Robert Peel at the time he met his death." I once shared the box with Captain Otway, for whom Cracknell the younger drove, in a spin from Aberystwith to Presteign, a distance of 64 miles, which was done in seven hours and a half, stoppages included. But this scarcely comes up to the achievement of the elder Cracknell and the Tantivy of 1833—125 miles at a sitting. To Warwickshire and the "Tantivy Trot" must, therefore, be accorded the ribbon of the road. The Birmingham quarters of the Tantivy were at the Hen and Chickens, and there was a special conveyance from the coach, *en route*, to and from the King's Head Inn, Wellesbourne.

CHAPTER XIX.

More Coaching and Sporting—Rivals for the Ribbon—Cutting the Trade—The Royal goes under—Racing and Steeplechasing—Mytton and his Day—Pleasant Memories.

During the seven years from 1833 to 1840, the coaching and sporting spirit at Leamington was at its height. In 1834, the climax was reached, when no fewer than 35 coaches were advertised to be leaving the Bath Hotel daily, and 33 from Copps's. Among the more prominent drags calling at or starting from the Royal were the Tally Ho, the Royal Express, the Eagle, the Crown Prince, the Tartar, the Telegraph, the Regulator, and the Royal Mail. Those from the Bath included the Royal Hope, the Nimrod, the Royal Mail, the Regulator, the Crown Prince, the Royal Sovereign, the Telegraph, the Tally Ho, and the Triumph. Several of these called at both hotels, and it was the aim of the two rival houses to establish special distinction in this respect by having coaches exclusively their own. The highest recommendation claimed for the Royal Sovereign over all others was that it was "the only London coach that started from and ended at Leamington." It was thus regarded as the Leamington coach *par excellence*. Messrs Joseph Hearn and Co., of London, and Mr. John Russell, of the Bath Hotel, were the proprietors, and the driver was Mr. Benjamin Ward, who then lived at No. 6, Church-street. The Bath and the Royal were the two great opposition houses for coaching supremacy, the Bedford, as I have already shown, putting in a special claim with its famous Tantivy, and turning the competition into a sort of triangular duel. Ben Ward, of the Sovereign, and Cracknell, of the Tantivy, were regarded as the two smartest whips in Warwickshire in those days. The Stoneleigh Hotel gave a political tone to the struggle by starting a London coach and

calling it the Liberal. Of the smaller items in the competition, Linney's omnibus, in 1834, ran to Coventry, as did also Price's Paul Pry, and Pittaway's accommodation car was added to the vehicles running between Warwick and Leamington. Towards the end of the season of 1834 relations grew somewhat strained between the two rival houses. The "entire removal of the Crown Prince to Copps's" was announced with a great flourish of trumpets from one end of the local coaching world to the other, associated with "reduced fares by the Tartar to London—30s. inside and 15s. outside." Then, of course, the owners of the Royal Sovereign had to make a similar reduction, claiming that their coach was "the only coach ever established between Leamington and London," and that "as the proprietors of other establishments cannot beat it by fair competition, they are stooping to every trick to deceive the public." Two months afterwards the fares of the Tartar were still further reduced to 25s. inside and 12s. outside, "starting from the Royal Hotel, Leamington, and the Castle Hotel, Warwick, doing the journey of 90 miles to London in 10 hours certain." Then the Bedford pranced in with its Nimrod, "a new coach from Leamington to the Cock Inn, Stony Stratford," handbills proclaiming that "John Gomm is determined this shall be the cheapest and swiftest coach in the United Kingdom!" Whereupon the Royal Hope was announced as "a new and superior coach to London," from the Bath Hotel, Leamington, and George Hotel, Warwick. It started in September, 1835, and its proprietors were W. Chaplin, R. Nelson, Coster and Waddell, J. Drinkwater, and John Russell. This defiant challenge as to superiority from the Bath was promptly answered by another from the Royal. Messrs. Copps and Son announced "very superior travelling by the Tartar at greatly reduced fares." There was added an irritating *nota bene* to the effect that "the superiority of travelling from this establishment needs no comment." The fares to London by the Tartar and Crown Prince were now "reduced to insides 21s., outsides 10s." Then the Bath pro-

claimed in huge posters that "the Royal Hope and the Royal Sovereign are the fastest flyers on the road," and that "a Royal Mail now leaves the Bath Hotel for London every evening at a quarter past eight." This caused a flutter at Copps's, who at once voted night coaches dangerous, and reminded the public that "the Old Crown Prince, a safe day coach, leaves the Royal every morning at a quarter past nine. Thus the battle for the moment was between the night coach and the day coach. To give a little variety, and to intensify excitement, the Bath put on the Star to Worcester and Malvern with superior inducements. This brought "very reduced fares for passengers and parcels" from the Royal, by "a new night coach, the Greyhound." Night coaches had ceased to be dangerous at the "corner" then! In another striking *nota bene*, "Messrs. Copps pledge themselves not to join any party in raising the price for carrying parcels to and from London." I hardly know whether the Bath had anything new to offer after this. I think a dignified silence ensued. But the Royal let fly a sort of Parthian shaft, to the effect that "the only direct coach to Liverpool is the Royal Express!" And thus the battle raged between the rival houses, till the railway came along and separated the combatants for ever. There was a faint recrudescence of the rivalry a few years later, between coaches running to and from Cheltenham, the fare there and back being reduced by competition to 2s. 6d.! Mr. Roberts, who occupied a portion of the old Royal Hotel premises in Clemens-street, also ran a coach to and from Birmingham.* But the struggle was against growing odds, and railways eventually got the best of it.

It was a picturesque sight to see the old Sovereign start in the morning from the Bath Hotel for London. The coach polished up till it sparkled in the sunshine like a vast Kohinoor on wheels, was run down from the stable yard at the back, and placed in front of the coach-office. Charles Hart, for many years the luggage porter there, busy as a bee stowing away luggage, drawing substantial tips from patrons—Charley was popu-

* See appendix (*m*).

lar with everybody, and everybody liked to show their appreciation of him—and exchanging witty banter with all and sundry, was about the liveliest character of the little crowd that clustered near the spot. Then, in the clear, bright morning air, would be heard the familiar trumpet-call of the guard—I forget his name—standing on the coach, his face glistening like a ripe apple in the sunshine. Then up would come the driver, Ward—the king of the coach—his overcoat on his arm, and his whip—the sceptre of his power—in his hand. This would be the signal for Boot, the head ostler—a good old servant at the Bath—to bring down the team from the stables. They would soon be put to, by which time Mr. Bell, at the coach-office, would have handed the way-bill to Ward, and all would be ready. The last touch was for the ostler to remove the rugs from the horses as they began to glide off, exposing their glossy coats to the light, and gladdening the eye still further with the dancing sheen of many hues that radiated from their velvet skins. Off they go! And away went the moving picture at a smart trot, round by the old church and up Radford-road, keeping rhythmic time to a lively fanfaronade by the guard as it vanished from sight in the warm sunshine.

A similar process was gone through at the Royal with other coaches—all music, animation, and excitement. The grand entrance to the hotel was particularly striking. At the foot of the staircase were two life-size figures holding argand lamps, on one side of the hall a bust of George the Fourth on a pedestal, and on the other a handsome pier table, supported by two bronze pedestals, on which was a colossal timepiece in mahogany case. On each side were two handsome Scaglioli pedestals, with two superb bronze tripods. On either side of the table was a beautifully-carved oak hall chair. On the staircase was a magnificent stained-glass window, in the centre the Royal Arms, richly emblazoned, surrounded by an ornamental scroll of gold and fawn-colour containing a representation of the principle views in Warwickshire, "worthy," as the chronicler tells us, "of a place in

the hall of any baronial residence." On one of the two carved chairs would sit, during the season, a blind Irish harper—Patrick Byrne. Patrick was white-haired and old, and he would make the grand hall throb with melody from his master-hand, for he was a famous artist. I have often seen him thus seated, and listened to him when a child; and have heard him wake the melodious echoes—they seem to be vibrant in my memory now—his eyeless face raised pathetically towards the heavens, as if invoking inspiration which found its answer in the divine pathos that palpitated from his touch. Patrick would be there every morning and evening—he was there every morning and evening for years—as the coaches went and came, and always reminded me of one of those bards or troubadours that seem to us to live only in the romaunts of classic and romantic times. And the magician—Michael Copps—that had produced as if by incantation all this melody and magnificence—this vast assemblage of property—this perfection of refined hospitality. What of him? The splendid monument he had reared should have stood for ever as a tribute to his business capacity and trading enterprise. It faded away instead like a dream, and nothing is left but for the memory of one, at least, of those who knew him, to fix his place in our local annals as of the bravest and best of our early village pioneers.

The Warwickshire Hunt being held in the vicinity of Leamington induced many sporting gentlemen to make the Spa their residential home, and this circumstance gave the early history of the town a character for high-class sport which it has always retained. A commodious building, adapted as kennels for the Warwickshire hounds, was stated in 1829 to be in course of erection at old Milverton, on the farm of Mr. T. Robbins. "Thus," says the chronicler, "the sporting world will make Leamington their resort during the season." In the same year a pack of excellent harriers was kept at the Spa, which turned out three or four days every week. In 1834 the Leamington races were first held. The meeting took place on Easter-Monday, April 20th,

the course being in two fields in the occupation of Mr. James Gill, saddler, 17, Lower Union Parade, and entries made to the stewards at the Half Moon, Satchwell-street. In the same year the Leamington Steeple-chases were first held, the course being laid out at Ashorne, and the races run on November 14th. At this contest the Marquis of Waterford's Jerry beat Captain Lamb's Vivian, which led to another match, in which Cock Robin, belonging to the Marquis of Waterford, was backed against Vivian for £1,000 a side. Vivian was ridden by Captain Beecher, and won splendidly. To celebrate the victory of the Warwickshire horse there was open house and a free cellar at the Bedford, and the church bells were set ringing, the popular event being still further emphasised by the publication of a coloured print showing "Captain Beecher on Vivian," which I have no doubt may be found on the walls of many a Warwickshire household to this day. The second course of the Leamington Steeple-chases was near Southam. The race was run in March, 1836. Four years later they were run on the Campion Hill course, when the Marquis of Waterford backed himself for £500 to be first over the seven first fences, and won the bet. Among those present were Lord Brooke, Lord Eastnor, Count Blucher, Sir Edward Mostyn, H. C. Wise, Captain Lamb, Captain Beecher, Tom Oliver, Mr. Samuel Merry, and other leading lights in the sporting world in those days. Lottery is said to have won the race, although there were many who firmly believed it to have been a dead-heat between Lottery and Seventy-four. I think it would be about the season of 1837 that the well-known "Jack Mytton" began to make his periodical appearances at the Spa, and to take part in those little extravagancies that were then associated with his name. If half the rumours of his reckless exploits were true, he had plenty to answer for, but many of them were not true, and others were exaggerated. His rallying ground was the Bedford Hotel, where he made things hum, and the money fly. I remember him well—a rather tall, slender youth, delicate-looking, with fair hair and light complexion, always

fashionably attired, with a superabundance of jewellery, and the general aspect of one in search of excitement and being unsuccessful in the wearisome quest. The last time I saw him he was perambulating the Parade, the very pink of fashion and the embodiment of apparently inexhaustible affluence, with a lady chatting merrily on each side of him. Forty years afterwards, I was told by one who met him that he was then acting as a sort of agent for the Earl of Abergavenny, a cripple from gout, on the back of a pony trained to move with circumspection on account of its master's tender limbs, and scarcely able, when on his feet, to lift one foot before the other. With John Mytton a school of sportsmen of the large-hearted and reckless order died out, but while they lasted, some of the brightest and best of them made Leamington their home, and the annals of the Spa contain nothing but pleasant memories of their sojourn upon the sunny banks of the Leam.

UNION PARADE, BEDFORD HOTEL, AND REGENT HOTEL, 1822

CHAPTER XX.

Union Row—Our First Photographer—Something like a Penknife—Small Profits and Quick Returns—Trade Pioneers—Haste to the Wedding—The Parade Finished—A Valuable Farm.

In his "History of Leamington," published in 1842, Hopper says: "The first house, raised in the midst of green fields, in the New Town, was the Golden Lion Hotel, Regent-street. This was in 1808. Then followed, in 1810, the house at present occupied by Baly and Righton. Shortly afterwards 20 houses were built by a Club, or Company, below Hewett's Library." There is a little conflict here as to the exact site of the first house erected in the New Town, but none as to the date. The first houses were those at present occupied by Dowler, and Kolsham and Marsh. Baly and Righton's, I remember, at the time Hopper's history was published, were drapers and silk mercers carrying on business at the north-west corner of the Upper Parade and Regent-street. This was originally a private house standing in a garden, and occupied by Colonel Russell. This was, no doubt, the second house erected in the New town, wherever the first may have been. The "20 houses below Hewett's Library" formed what was known as Union-row. These were begun about 1810. The Assembly Rooms, opened in 1814, would not have been commenced till about 1812 or 1813. The structure extended from the Parade to Bedford-street. There were two entrances—one from Regent-street at the Bedford-street end, and the other from the Parade or east end, the latter under a projecting portico supported by four Ionic columns. Messrs. Elliott and Hill, of London, were the builders. It was some years after its erection that Hewett's Library was formed out of the wing at the Parade end of the Assembly Rooms, approached by a double flight of

some six or eight steps, built in the projection caused by the portico entrance, and protected by light iron railings. The other entrance led to the billiard and card-rooms, and I remember, in 1835, Mr. Powis and his son were billiard markers there. It was here the first photographs were taken in Leamington, and they were produced by the Daguerreotype process, being announced as "sun portraits." I well remember seeing specimens exhibited at the Bedford-street entrance, and a portrait of Louis Napoleon, afterwards Emperor of the French, who frequently visited the billiard-room, was one of the number. The 20 houses below the Assembly Rooms were the first block of buildings erected in line on the Parade, and were the first lighted with gas from Warwick in 1823. They were built as boarding-houses for the accommodation of visitors, and were occupied as such, having, as Pratt tells us, "neat balconies, and are assessed at £70 a year." Some of them must have had shops attached to them at the time they were built, for Pratt, writing in 1811, speaks of "the Rackstrows, of Oxford," having "opened a repository in Union-row." In 1828, as I observe by a directory published in that year, the Misses Rackstrow had a child's linen warehouse at No. 2, Union Parade. This property belonged to the late Mr. Isaac Bright, father of Mr. H. Bright. It was converted into a shop and let to the Misses Rackstrow, who only occupied it for 12 months, after which Mr. Bright had his business there, as watchmaker, jeweller, and silversmith. Mr. Bright was for many years previously a principal in the house of Bright and Sons, of Sheffield and Buxton, and I remember there was exhibited in the front shop window on the Parade, as a specimen of high-class Sheffield cutlery, a pen-knife containing a hundred or more blades, under a glass case. There was a popular legend current among the boys about town in reference to this particular piece of Sheffield workmanship, to the effect that the proprietor of the establishment was fully prepared to hand over the hydra-bladed knife to anyone who could open and close all the blades without cutting his fingers. I have often thought I should like to try the experiment, have

often lingered and looked at the article with that laudable object in view, and have as often given up the idea in despair, thinking it just as easy to open and shut, without receiving a hurt, every spine on the back of a hedgehog, assuming the animal to be all spines, and every spine the blade of a penknife. The clockmakers, watchmakers, and jewellers in business in 1829 were J. Carter, 1, Clemens-street; Thomas Court, Regent-street; and J. Hordern, Bath-street. In 1832, besides the foregoing, there were Messrs. Lee, 15, Clemens-street; W. Shorthose, Ranelagh-place and 14, Bath-street; Isaac Bright, 2, Lower Union Parade; and J. Hordern had removed from Bath-street to 7, Clemens-street. A son of Mr. Hordern was a dentist, at whose marriage I figured in a most unusual wedding garment, namely an apron, that had once been white, covered with printer's ink, and irreverently entered the sacred edifice with my shirtsleeves turned up high above the elbow, hands and arms black as ebony, and smudgy face to match, having surreptitiously ran out from my work in Gloucester-street to see the nuptial show, accompanied by my dear old fellow apprentice, who presented just such an incongruous and grotesque appearance as myself. The wedding took place in Spencer-street Chapel, the bride being a daughter of Mr. Cash, of Brunswick-street.

In his first guide of 1812, Pratt further speaks of "Williams's Hotel, called the Bedford (now the London and Midland Bank) being situated almost in the centre of as handsome a range of buildings for accommodation as can be seen anywhere out of the Metropolis." The Bedford stood somewhere about the middle of the "20 houses erected below Hewett's Library," forming the original Union-row. Some idea may thus be formed as to the point where the first line of houses—Union-row—terminated. It was many years before the line extended to the corner of Dormer-place, the intervening space being an open field till that extension was made, and it came gradually. In the directory of 1829, I find that the only occupiers of shops among the 20 houses forming Union-row, or Lower Union Parade, as it

was then called, were the Misses Rackstrow, at No. 2; the Misses Fox, milliners, at No. 9; H. Hilsdon, confectioner, at No. 16; and James Gill, saddler and harness maker, at No. 17. In the same guide, Mr. T. Hewett, bookseller, is shown to be in business in the Upper Parade. In a guide published three years later, he is located at No. 1, Lower Union Parade, which formed part of the Assembly Rooms. We may take it, therefore, that the east wing of the Assembly Rooms, at the Parade end, was altered and turned into business premises for Mr. Hewett some time between 1830 and 1832. By the year 1833 several more of the original houses called Union-row were converted into business premises. No. 3 was then occupied by Nelson and Co., chemists; No. 8, by C. Lawrence, boot and shoemaker; No. 12, by C. Elstone, print and musicseller; No. 18, by Mr. Lawrance, confectioner; No. 20, by Owen Owen, music warehouse; and 23, a later erection beyond the original 20 houses, by A. North, china warehouse. By this time further houses were added to the 20. In 1833 Messrs. Merridew removed from Bath-street to 27, Lower Parade, and it was here Mr. Fairfax's paper was published after he had left and gone to Australia. Some little time later the firm was Merridew and Jones, and there was a local tradition current at the time, I remember, that Mr. Jones was the author of the song, "The Monks of old." Merridew and Jones were succeeded by Mr. Dewhirst, whose widow carried on the business for some time after her husband's death.

There was still, in 1833, an open space to fill up before reaching what is now Dormer-place, and in this gap, for some time, travelling exhibitions, hardware vans, penny peep-shows, silhouette artists who preceded photography, and things of a similar kind, pitched their tents periodically, the intervals between being varied by the settlement of party feuds among the boys, arising out of Old Town and New Town rivalries. The spot, in fact, in those days, was recognised as the local cock-pit specially ordained for that purpose. About the year 1835 one of the spaces between permanent

business premises at this particular spot was covered with a long canvas tent—a sort of arcade—running back some 20 yards, well stocked with toys and fancy goods, one end entirely open to the Parade and to the public, and the interior made still more attractive to visitors by a lively competition improvised between musical-boxes that were kept going all day long. At the lower end of the interior was painted on the canvas the text: "Small profits and quick returns is the basis of this establishment." The proprietor was a short, stout, benevolent-looking personage, with florid complexion, and a happy, contented look, as though accustomed to command success in life by a habit, which seemed to be natural to him, of constantly gazing on the sunny side of things. On the spot where his temporary pitch was made was afterwards built the handsome and substantial business premises known as Ellis's Bazaar and Fancy Repository, subsequently Bown's Bazaar, and Mr. Ellis was the sunny-featured, industrious founder of that business, established on the never-failing mercantile basis of "small profits and quick returns."

It would be about 1833 that the premises a little lower down were built and occupied by Messrs. White and Son, founders of the business now carried on by Mr. J. Anthony Locke, auctioneer and estate agent. The firm consisted of Mr. John White and his son Owen. I think Mr. Owen White had an office in Bath-street for some time before the new premises were opened. Their first book-keeper was Joseph Manning, who was one of the founders of the Temple of Peace Lodge of Oddfellows, Manchester Unity, then held at the Rose and Crown, Kenilworth-street * With the erection of Messrs. White and Son's premises, and others a little lower down, a junction was formed with Dormer-place, which had been in course of construction meanwhile, and thus, about the year 1834 or 1835, the Parade on the west side was completed, from the top of what was then York-terrace to the corner of what is now Dormer-place, having been begun in 1808. The first to occupy the corner premises in Dormer-place, I think, was

(* See appendix *n*.)

Mr. W. Flavel, inventor and manufacturer of the famous Leamington kitchener. Up to that time, and for some years previously, Mr. Flavel's place of business was in Bath-street, next to the Bath Hotel. His son, the late Mr. Sidney Flavel, had the management of the retail business there, and to him belongs the distinction of having, at the old shop in Bath-street, made me a present, as a Christmas-box, of the first pocket-knife I ever possessed. His son is now (1894) Mayor of the borough.

With regard to the further growth of the New Town, the first four houses in York-terrace were erected by Mr. Lea in 1826, then followed 5, 6, and 7, which latter, Hopper says, was "built for Dr. Jephson." The Doctor was certainly living there in 1839. Some portions of the east side of the Upper Parade were built by Mr. John Toone, and in 1835 a member of his family occupied one of the shops as a confectioner. In 1832 Mr. Toone himself was living at No. 11, Warwick-street. He was also the builder of some houses at New Milverton, to which I shall refer in another chapter. The first plan for the erection of the New Town was under the direction of Mr. P. F. Robinson. Beauchamp-square, first called Newbold-square, was begun in 1825, and Clarendon-square was laid out in the same year. Regent-street, first known as Cross-street, was laid out at an early period, but its first buildings as a line of street date from 1814. Wellington-street was formed in 1826. Portland-place, Grove-street, Dale-street, and Portland-street sprang up during the next 10 years. A great part of the land on which this division of the town was built was purchased from Mr. Edward Willes, together with the land belonging to the squares on the north, and all to the east of the Kenilworth-road. Hopper says: "The formation of the New Town was entirely due to Bertie Greathead, Esq., of Guy's Cliff, who had a small farm of about 65 acres, stretching down to the river Leam from the north. This possession opened the way to the vast and astonishing improvements which followed." Mr. Hopper further states that "Union-row was erected on a portion of Mr. Greathead's farm,

which, when rented as a farm, let at £70 per annum, but, when conceded for building purposes, brought the proprietor from £40,000 to £50,000." The land on which Clarendon-place stands was bought of Mr. Richard Tomes by Mr. Theophilus Taylor, of Warwick, and re-sold by him in building lots. The land for the Lansdowne Hotel, and two houses above it, was sold in 1827. Two or three houses had been erected previously. "Thus," remarks Hopper, writing in 1842, "this beautiful range of streets forming the Union Parade, unequalled by any out of the Metropolis, has been completed since 1808, the upper part, indeed, within the last 15 or 18 years, and some of the structures necessary to its completion within only a few years." Euston-place was begun about 1832, and I find that, in 1835, Wombwell was announced as having his menagerie "stationed in Euston-place, opposite Newbold Wood-walk." Hamilton-terrace-west was built about 1835, and Mr. Swain was the builder of some portions of it, if not the whole. The original proprietors of the Pump Room, erected in 1813, were Bertie Greathead, John Tomes, H. W. Tancred, and H. Parker. The famous avenue of trees, now known as the Linden-avenue, was planted by Mr. Cullis, of the Ranelagh Gardens, with his own hand, in 1814.

CHAPTER XXI.

New Milverton—Its Early History—A Novel Machine—Honours for Snitterfield—Our Gospel Oak—Wombwell the First—Seeing the Elephant—A Pathetic Story—The White Lady.

THE development of New Milverton, as a suburb of the Spa, has been equally as progressive and striking as that which distinguishes the history of the mother-town. Pratt refers to the "lovely green lane" that led from Emscote to Binswood, forming the old high-road towards Lillington from that direction. This "lovely green lane" is now Rugby-road, and instead of intersecting fields of green and gold, and rich mellow acres of growing corn—where the clapper of the wheat-watcher was heard all day, and the discordant note of the corn-crake all night—it passes through two populous rural townships, Milverton and Lillington. The first buildings erected in New Milverton, before it came to be known by that name, and the only structures existing there for years, were a little cluster of wattled cottages that stood at the north-west corner of what is now Union-road, nearly opposite St. Mark's Church. These cottages might have been in existence as early as the oldest of the humblest structures that characterised the village Spa in Satchwell's time, for in my earliest recollection of them, about 1833, they were then crumbling and decrepit from great age. They were a group of some half-dozen tiny whitewashed cabins, built on a corner of what appeared at that time to be a piece of common or waste land. Three of them faced the highway—now Rugby-road—two of them being entered by ascending a flight of ricketty brick steps bulging out upon the high road, the remainder having their frontage in what is now Union-road. This road, in the early

days, was a footpath leading across fields towards Leamington Old Town. The cottages, I fancy—or several of them—were built by Mr. Harmer, Johnny Harmer, as he was more familiarly called, a small contractor, who himself lived in one of the cots, and had a stable for his horses in a dark cellar under two of the other. One of the humble dwellings under which the cellar-stable ran was occupied, I remember, by a young woman who committed suicide by throwing herself into the Leam. The circumstances were romantic. It was a love affair, and resulted in a double suicide. The young woman and a female companion agreed to die, and, tying themselves together with a handkerchief, were found in the water locked in the embrace of death. A letter left on the bank of the river contained these lines:—

I promised once more, on Sunday night,
To walk again with my heart's delight,
On the river's banks where the billows roar,
There we did part to meet no more.

Johnny Harmer was an old man when I, as a child, first knew him, and he was noted for the great ability he displayed in educating horses in the art and mystery of working without food. That some of the animals were not successful in acquiring this peculiar art was often made manifest, for a dead horse lying peacefully on the heath, or common, adjoining the cottages was one of the most frequent objects I remember in the early landscape.

About the year 1828 another group of cottages was built at the north-east corner of Union-road, some of them facing that road, and others the highway, looking over fields to the north. The corner house was an inn called the Bell Tavern. To the first landlord of the Bell—Mr. Dosha, to whom I have already referred—a story attaches. About the year 1837 Mr. Dosha left the Bell Tavern and took a house in the same line of business at Snitterfield. One Sunday, Mr. Clarke (sale manager for Messrs. White and Son) and my father drove out to Snitterfield to spend the day, and I accompanied them. I was just then in the boyish throes of an

engineering problem that was troubling me greatly—how to become the possessor of a velocipede, now known as a tricycle. The hobby-horse was the bicycle of those days. The tricycle was a new idea of propulsion. While at Snitterfield, an old iron fly-wheel of a disused malt-mill at Mr. Dosha's house caught my eye. The possibilities of that fly-wheel bore down upon me like an avalanche. I pleaded for it, obtained it, and took it home in triumph. This formed the basis of the coming novelty. Two more iron wheels—a large one to match the Snitterfield treasure and a small guider—were made for me by a smith named Fisher, who then lived in Grove-place, and had his workshop at the back of the west side of Brunswick-street, in the rear of the Victoria School. The main shaft of the machine was a bed-post, which came to hand somehow or other, I cannot tell how. All the rest was iron. Cranks and treadles, also supplied by Fisher, were forthcoming in due course. The machine was eventually put together. Grand! Then it was painted—bright yellow, fine-lined with black—by Mr. Robert Tew. Glorious!! Then, proud of my possession, and happy in the belief that there was nothing like it in the whole wide world, out I brought it one fine day. Looking back upon it now, I think I might safely have challenged the world to produce its fellow. It looked gorgeous and resplendent enough, but was troubled with two disadvantages. It would only travel on the stone pavement, which the police prevented; and it made such a horrible clatter that it frightened the horses in the street, and the police put a stop to that too. However, it had the honour of being the first tricycle ever manufactured at Leamington, if not in Warwickshire—Coventry manufacturers, please note!—and I am determined that Snitterfield, and Mr. Dosha, and all concerned in the creation of a machine so fearfully and wonderfully made, shall share that honour.

But let us return to the Bell Tavern and the cottages erected in 1828 at the north-east corner of Union-road. Those houses were erected by Mr. John Toone. At the eastern extremity was an open space called Captain's-gardens, so named

from the fact that Captain Barrett, a retired officer in the army, occupied Milverton Lodge, which for some time stood alone in those gardens. Milverton-crescent was not completed for many years after. Between this point and what is now Guy's Cliffe-road was an open space. Opposite this road, at the north end, was a small clap-gate leading into Guy's Cliffe fields, in the first field being a farm-house known as Gunnery Farm, and called in my early time Abbey's Farm, from the fact that the farmer occupying it was named Abbey. At the north-east corner of this field stood the famous "Watch Oak," or "Gospel Oak," by some called the "Vicar's Oak," a relic of antiquity round whose gnarled and elfish trunk there lingered in the old days many legendary remains of folk and fairy lore that made the spot both historic and interesting. In a note by Mr. Ribton-Turner, in that marvellous Eldorado of Warwickshire historical and topographical wealth, "Shakespeare's Land," explanatory reference is made to these "Gospel Oaks," of which that in Abbey's field was no doubt one. "These trees," says the author, "which distinguished the limits of contiguous parishes, were so called from the custom by which in ancient times the Gospel of the day was read under them by the parochial clergyman during the annual perambulation of the boundaries of the parish by the leading inhabitants in Rogation week." It would be near the point where the old oak once stood in Abbey's field to which the parish of Old Milverton would extend in the olden time, and here, in all probability, the ancient ceremonial was gone through at the annual parochial perambulation. In 1833, a row of houses was built called Gunnery-row, extending some 50 yards towards Emscote from the north-west corner of Guy's Cliffe-road, and beyond this, in that year, there were no other buildings till the Warwick side of what was then known as Portobello bridge was reached. The whole of the north side of Rugby-road from Emscote to Lillington-road were open fields, and the only structures to be seen between Emscote and Lillington on that side of the road, as far as I can remember, were Gunnery

farmhouse, a barn in a field opposite the Bell Tavern, and a small thatched cottage near a brook by the roadside at Binswood, occupied for many years by a dairyman named Townsend.

At the erection of Milverton Episcopal Chapel in 1833, the whole of the space between what is now Bertie-road to the north and the river Leam to the south was open fields. The space between Milverton-hill, north side, and Church-hill, south side, was unenclosed land. On this open space Wombwell's menagerie exhibited, strolling players performed, and various kinds of travelling exhibitions pitched their tents. The original Wombwell was a little sharp-featured man, and the only time I ever saw him was about the year 1835, on this piece of unenclosed land near Milverton Episcopal Chapel. He was wearing a low-crowned, bell-shaped box-hat, highly polished, and a sort of drover's mackintosh, much too large for him, reaching down to his heels. His occupation at the moment of our conjunction was that of encouraging an Old-town boy and a New-town boy engaged in feudal fisticuffs. When the fight was over he called the victor to him with a "Bravo, little 'un!" patted him on the back, handed him sixpence, and told him to "go in and see the elephant." The victor was myself. The tragical death of his grand-daughter, Ellen Eliza Bright, who was killed at Rochester by a tiger in its den on the 11th of January, 1850, nearly broke George Wombwell's heart. When he gave evidence at the inquest he is reported to have "cried and sobbed like a child," and is said to have "never been known to smile afterwards." Miss Bright was only 17 years of age when she met her death. She was buried in Coventry Cemetery, in the same grave as her cousin, William Wombwell, who was killed by an elephant at Coventry only the year before. This was the identical elephant that figured in the Godiva procession in 1848, preceding the great historical cavalcade with a gilded castle on its back, representing the Coventry city arms —the elephant and castle.*

The upper part of what is now known as Beauchamp-street at New Milverton was in the early

*See Appendix (o.)

days called the Hill. At the top was an open field —Heath-terrace now runs across the middle of it. This field remained unenclosed for years, and was common to the villagers as a sort of heath or waste land. The Hill was very steep, and at the bottom an open brook ran across the road, or through fields as they were then, before the road was made. From this stream Brook-street, erected on its east bank, takes its name. The same brook was crossed by an Alpine bridge at the bottom of what is now Milverton-hill, at its junction with Portland-place, and similarly at the bottom of Church-hill at its junction with Wellington-street, and Bertie-road at its junction with Warwick-street. There is every indication of this having been the channel of a considerable stream years ago, that emptied itself into the Leam near the western extremity of Portland-place.

I have often thought that if Wilkie Collins had gone through the earliest of my Milverton experiences, his "Woman in White" might have had a different opening and a different ending. When a child I was put to pick up such elementary crumbs of learning as were then going at a dame's school kept by one Mistress Hammond. There were some half-dozen little human chicks besides myself engaged in the same scholastic occupation, and our school-house was the tiny wattled cot that stood at the corner of the antiquated and tumble-down group to which I have already referred. One day a shadow and a great silence fell upon us all. At the open casement appeared something I shall never forget. It suddenly shut out the sunshine, and the shade of it fell athwart our hearts. I think mine must have stopped beating for a time. It was the face of a woman—of an angel as it seemed to my childish imagination—beautiful as those whom poets passionately dream over and artists love to portray. The head was uncovered, and the rich, dark-brown hair, done up in massive coils, raised itself into a glossy apex that looked like a coronet of glory. The face was white as alabaster—and as cold and rigid—clear-cut and classic in its frozen outlines. The only features of life and light were the eyes—large, lustrous, and dark. A

beautifully-formed bust, in tight-fitting bodice of white, was also visible, and the apparition, seen through the casement that surrounded it like an antique frame, looked like some wondrous achievement of classic form—some divine masterpiece of the sculptor's or painter's art. For a few moments the eyes peered vaguely into the interior, vacant and expressionless. Then a heavily-jewelled hand and bare arm, both white and beautifully-formed as every other feature of the mysterious outline, were raised and held above the eyes, as if to shade them from the outer light for a more intent gaze within. Then there came into the lustrous orbs such an expression of hungry search—intense—penetrating—burning. Then followed a look of agonized disappointment—the jewelled hand and bare arm were listlessly lowered!—the apparition was gone. It was the pathetic story of a mother looking for a little child that never came.

The mystery was afterwards explained, and the White Lady soon became a figure familiar to us. Always in white—snowy bodice, close and tight-fitting up to the beautifully-rounded throat, leaving the arms bare below the elbow; white embroidered short petticoat, and embroidered kirtle open at the front, the corners drawn up and fastened at the back of the waist. Head always uncovered, and the glossy coils always looking like a coronal of glory. Sometimes the figure would stop at the open door for a moment, rigid and cold as a statue of sculptured marble, would gaze inside with a vacant look, and then pass on, always walking with slow and solemn step, and always with both hands clasped behind her. Across Guy's Cliffe fields was a favourite walk of this mysterious visitor. And Abbey's field, the first of the sylvan series in those days, was a favourite playground of ours, too, as children. The White Lady—and we had all got to speak and to think of her very tenderly—would stand for hours, watching our gambols among the daisies in the grass, motionless as a statue, a look of indiscribable tenderness in her beautiful eyes—a dream of sculptured symmetry set up in the soft sunshine, the picture of desolate loneliness. And her heart's

desolation was made still more pathetic by the happy sweetness of the surroundings—the merry laughter of children at play, the leafy loveliness that shimmered in the tremulous air, the bright green meadows, and the singing of birds. The White Lady was always followed at a distance by a female attendant, who never either approached her or spoke to her. This unfortunate lady was the wife of Captain Barrett, to whom I have already referred. Abroad once with her husband in India, her only child—a little boy—was torn from her arms and killed in her presence by some natives in revolt, and the light of her reason was quenched for ever. Such was the pathetic story as it was afterwards made known to me, and the first visit of the sorely-stricken lady to our village school at New Milverton remains in my memory as a pure and beautiful classic among the many pictures of my life's experience—the bereaved mother searching for the lost idolised babe that never returned.

CHAPTER XXII.

Lillington—Beware of the Bull!—Right of Way—Taurus Outwitted—Maypoles and Sweeps—Drat the Boys!—The Regal Muse in Warwickshire—A Glimpse of Paradise.

"A PATH to your left, through a delightfully pleasant and shady lane, leads you direct to Leamington, about a mile distant." This was how the guide-book of 1829 directed visitors and tourists the way to Leamington, as they came up from Lillington Church and stood undecided which way to turn when they arrived at the junction with Kenilworth-road. About a mile distant! Why, this Lillington is now as much a part of Leamington as Milverton is, and both of them help to make up a perfect whole—the Royal Spa. The rustic mile—the "delightfully pleasant and shady lane"—that intervened, in 1829, between Lillington Church and the village Spa is now fringed with charming villa residences, and the rural suburb of Lillington, like that other stretch of Arcadian loveliness—Milverton—has a local government all to itself. For some years, the Crown Inn at Lillington stood alone in its rural glory. The directory of 1829 makes no mention of this well-known hostelry, but in that of 1830 I find it announced that "the newly-established exotic nursery-gardens of Messrs. James Frost and Co. are near the Crown Inn on the Kenilworth-road." We may take it, therefore, that both the Crown Inn and Frost's Nursery came simultaneously about the year 1829. In my early recollection, Frost's Nursery at Lillington was one of the most attractive local institutions of the time, and the walk thence to Coventry, through Stoneleigh Park, one of the most delightful. In the early days, in taking that walk, pedestrians were wont to make a short cut, just above Frost's, across the fields, thus, besides shortening the journey, avoiding a dusty lane. There was always

a question as to right of way across the meadows, and one of the tenants of the farm once adopted an ingenious method of bringing an immemorial right into desuetude. One of the fields we had to cross was known as the leg-of-mutton field, from its configuration exactly resembling the hind leg of a sheep. Sitting on the stile by which the field was entered, you could get a panoramic view of Coventry, with its three spires, in the hazy distance, which in itself was worth going a long pilgrimage to see. In this field a dangerous bull was allowed to roam at its own sweet will, and myself and companion, as boys, have had many a run for our lives, with a pair of horns in close contiguity to us. This was rare sport for us then, but with others the amusement might not have been so agreeable, and the result was that the right of way seemed likely to become gradually extinguished. But myself and companion saw things in a different light. The walk was a favourite one with us, as true-born Britons we resented any base attempt to undermine our rights, and, bull or no bull, we were determined to cross the leg-of-mutton field just as often as we chose, or perish in the attempt. "We'll fix him!" said my companion one day, and he unfolded his plans. The next time we went that way the attention of the bull was attracted from the footpath by a red handkerchief being waved aggressively over the top of the hedge at one end of a walking-stick, my companion being at the other end of the stick. I walked over in peace. Then the obnoxious colour was violently waved over the hedge on the other side of the field by myself, and my companion soon joined me with the same peaceful effort. We never had any more difficulty with that bull. Ten years ago when on a visit to the Spa, the same old companion and I made for the same old short-cut. I found it stopped up. How the stoppage was brought about I cannot say, but I know a public right of way existed there more than 60 years ago, and was an old public right then. I now claim it as one of my most interesting recollections, that my friend and I were among those who sturdily insisted upon that right and enjoyed it.

One of my earliest recollections of Cubbington is that of having once engineered a Punch-and-judy show at the then New Inn at a May-day festival held there fifty years ago. A maypole was erected in an adjoining field, the usual rustic sports followed, then came Punchinello in the clubroom. This May-day festival was also a feature at New Milverton in those days. Here they elected their May Queen, had their maypole-dance, took tea, sang madrigals, and generally enjoyed themselves. The May-day sports in the town were much more boisterous. Here Jack-in-the-green held high jinks, and the sweeps turned out. One Handley was king of the sweeps in 1833. He was a cutler and lived in Kenilworth-street. Mounted on the biggest waggon-horse he could get—he himself was short and of ponderous build—the animal bedizened with ribbons, and Handley dressed as a military commander-in-chief, with huge Wellingtonian hat on his head, a long broadsword in his hand, and capacious jack-boots about his muscular legs, he would head a motley procession of men in women's clothes and women in men's attire, one or two carrying long brass ladles to collect money in. At every public-house they would stop and dance round the Jack-in-the-green, to drum-beating and the playing of pandean pipes or a fife. Sir John Barleycorn generally put a stop to the festival early.

The association of Coombe Abbey with Lillington brings me to an incident that may prove an interesting addition to the historical archives of Warwickshire. A few months ago I was turning over some files of old newspapers, and in a copy of the *London Evening Post* of April 17th, 1790, a head-line, "The Regal Muse—poem by Queen Elizabeth," caught my eye. The poem was as follows:—

I grieve, yet dare not show my discontent.
I love, and yet am forced to seem to hate.
I do, yet dare not say I ever meant.
I seem stark mute, yet inwardly do prate.
I am, and am not—freeze and yet am burned,
Since from myself my other self is turned.

My care is like my shadow in the sun,
Follows me flying, flies when I pursue;
Stands and lies by me, does what I have done;
This too familiar care doth make me rue.
No means I find to rid him from my breast,
Till by the end of things it be suppressed.

Some gentler passions steal into my mind,
For I am soft, and made of melting snow.
O be more cruel, Love, and so be kind.
Let me or float or sink—be high or low.
Or let me live in some more sweet content,
Or die, and so forget what love was meant.

The poem was signed "Eliza Regina," and an editorial footnote explained that the verses were an extract from the MSS. in the Ashmole Museum, 6,969 (781), page 42. My first impression was that this Eliza Regina must have been the Princess Elizabeth Stuart, grand-daughter of Mary, Queen of Scots, daughter of James I., wife of the Elector Palatine of Hanover, afterwards Queen of Bohemia, mother of Sophia, whose son was George I., from whom came the Crown of England in direct succession to Queen Victoria. This Elizabeth was placed by James I., her father, under the care of Baron Harrington, who brought her to Coombe Abbey, in Warwickshire, where, in her 13th year she composed a poem addressed to her guardian. This poem, copied from Miss Benger's memoirs, I saw quoted by Sir James Sawyer not long since, and I was at first inclined to think the same hand wrote the poem I have quoted, as well as the one spoken of by Sir James. After careful analysis, however, and further reference, the conclusion is clear that the poem from the Ashmole collection was not written by Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia, but by Elizabeth, Queen of England. From the association of the former with Coombe Abbey and Coventry, and the connection of the latter with the Earl of Leicester and Kenilworth Castle, the two poems may well possess unusual interest to Warwickshire. "As far as is known," says Sir James Sawyer, "the poem written and addressed to her guardian at Coombe Abbey was the only metrical composition written by Princess Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia." Queen Elizabeth must

have been a prolific writer of meritorious verse. The Earl of Leicester's jealous reference to Raleigh —"She hath capped verses with him, and such fooleries '—would imply that the Maiden Queen was much given to poetry. I once saw in the *Topographer* of 1790 a poem by Queen Elizabeth, entitled "A ditty on the factions raised by the Queen of Scots while prisoner in England." Several other poems, signed "Eliza Regina," appear in MSS. among the Ashmolean antiquities, but there is not one equal in merit to the poem I have quoted. It is essentially Shakespearean, which adds to it another Warwickshire interest, and favours the assumption that the writer must have taken the Bard of Avon as her poetic model. The poem altogether, by the freedom with which Queen Elizabeth makes it the medium for frank introspection, throws a lurid light on much that is but faintly recorded in history, but which Sir Walter Scott so powerfully interprets in the story he tells of Leicester's ill-starred love, of Elizabeth's impassioned jealousy, and of poor Amy Robsart's pathetic death At the Castle Hotel, Kenilworth, is a series of cartoons impanelled on the walls, illustrating some of the most striking scenes of Sir Walter Scott's novel, "Kenilworth." Those cartoons were painted by a youth who graduated at the studio of Mr. Reginald Easton, a well-known miniature portrait-painter of Leamington fifty years ago, and the lad used to spend what he called his holidays at classic Kenilworth, illustrating Scott on the walls of the hotel he chose as his holiday home. He died at Bath in 1883, where he resided for some years, a well-known portrait painter, and almost his last contribution to the world of art before his death was a presentation portrait of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, then Prime Minister. I have since had the personal assurance of Mr. Gladstone that the likeness is one of the most satisfactory in his possession. I am naturally gratified at this, for, in addition to the artist being an old Leamingtonian, he was my brother.

The old village church of St. James's, that stood on the site where the present modern structure stands, at Old Milverton, was a relic of ecclesi-

astical antiquity that can scarcely be realised by the present generation. The little square wooden tower looked for all the world like an enlarged dovecote, standing at the head of some crumbling walls in a drowsy, unkempt graveyard, the little group nestling in leafy foliage, and looking as though it had been dreaming there for untold ages. The Manor of Milverton was anciently held by Philip de Astley, of William, Earl of Warwick, "by the service of holding the Earl's stirrup when he should mount or alight from his horse." Mushrooms and crab-apples were the toll I used to levy on that particular manor in the far-off days—mushrooms on the demesne of farmer Cattell—crab-apples on the broad acres of farmer Knight. With regard to the latter there has been a long-standing misapprehension, which may as well be cleared up. For a long time the good dame whose duty it was to keep white the surplices worn by the choristers at Milverton Episcopal Chapel- one Mistress Comely—was sorely puzzled to account for the appearance of certain patches of what she took to be iron-mould, that disfigured each vestment when crab-apples were in season. "Drat the boys!" complained the old lady once to the incumbent, opening and exhibiting to him in the belfry a damaged surplice, "it really do worrit me to death—that it do!" The garment looked like the skin of a piebald horse. "Boys!" said the incumbent, next practice night, kindly but firmly, "Tell the truth—what is the meaning of *this*?" And the piebald surplice was once more flaunted before us. He might as well have inquired of the moon why it shone. The secret has been locked up from that day to this, and now it is out. The stains were the result of twisting farmer Knight's crab-apples in part of the surplice, crushing the fruit, and sucking the juice through the fabric at intervals during the service. We called it "Old Milverton cider!" and we regarded it as an infallible recipe for making our voices melodious.

I used to think, and I think now, that the nooks of bracken, and the little stray glimpses of rural scenery round and about Old Milverton and Guy's Cliffe, have no equal anywhere for delightful

artistic effect. The miller's cottage, covered with wild roses and honeysuckles, was always the envy of my heart as I have sat near the spot in the far-off days. There was the old mill, white with flour-dust as though hoary with age, and the mill-pool shining through the throbbing foliage like a sheet of glass in the sunlight. And oh for the rhythmic movement of the mill-wheel, as the waters came tumbling from its grip like children joyously from school, spreading themselves out into the broader reaches through fields bright with daisies and buttercups. A cluster of elm trees, lofty and leafy, spread strong arms with an air of protection over the mill and its belongings, and stood gazing as if in admiration of their own beauty in the placid waters of the upper pool. The willows yonder, that lean over from the bank with their tresses falling gracefully into the river, might well be taken for elfin bathers plunging into the cool stream. And the invisible under-current stirs into life the reedy sedge that grows on either side, and you can hear the rushes murmur the language of their hearts in rustling whispers. The meadow is flecked with sheep, and lowing kine lie here and there upon the greensward, repairing anon to stand knee-deep at the cool riverside in the shade of the leafy oak, while an angler, solitary in his occupation, throws out the fly, making ripples upon the shining water. What marvel if, surrounded by such dreamy associations as these, the drowsy hum of the grinding-stones at the mill should lull you to sleep? You will be awakened presently by the cawing of a colony of rooks that from time immemorial have made their home in the shady shelter of the elms that tower around. The air is full of delicious odours that fall upon the imagination with the soothing effect of a happy dream, and the eye is charmed with the restful colour that meets it at every turn. I have often thought that if there is a glimpse of Paradise to be had anywhere in the world, it is under the trees by the river side at Guy's Cliff, in the summer time, when the air is calm and the sunshine makes all things lovely.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Johnny Boke's Castle—Too Tall for the Job—A Royal Understudy—Our Piscatorial Joker—Jullien and the Big Drum—Early Entertainers—Napoleon and Duboski—Making History.

ALMOST every town of note in history has been able to boast of its haunted house, and Leamington is by no means out of the running in this respect. Sixty years ago it possessed one of those interesting contributories to the fascinating lore of the psychologist. In those days, what is now called Ranelagh-terrace, a line of street running direct from the canal bridge in Clemens-street to Tachbrook-road, only extended from the bridge for about 50 yards in a westerly direction. Here there was a hedge and a five-barred gate across the road, and from this hedge to Tachbrook-road was what we knew as the Rope-walk, with a row of trees on each side. At the top of this Rope-walk, with the frontage towards Tachbrook-road, stood a large, unfinished villa residence. The builder had stopped short at the shell of the structure, and the place had become a ruin. The doorways and window-frames were all boarded up; it had a most desolate-looking appearance, and, standing as it did quite alone in what was then an out-of-the-way part of the town, it soon got the credit of being endowed with supernatural characteristics. Many stories were told, and some were printed, of white forms having been seen to glide through the boarded-up doorway, of wild, unearthly shrieks and demoniacal laughter being heard in the dead of night at the yawning-time of graveyards, and of a ghostly figure as tall as a lamp-post taking its stand nightly as a sort of sentry at the fearsome spot. Many of these stories gained credence in the popular mind, the road that way was carefully avoided after dark, and there was much specula-

tion as to the cause of it all. The only human being in Leamington who dared go near the haunted house—for that it *was* haunted many fervently believed—was a man well known about town as Johnny Boke. This characteristic personage had courageously taken up his abode in the ruin, where he lived and slept. How he got in and out nobody ever knew, for every aperture was boarded up. He was often seen to stalk up the Rope-walk and suddenly disappear at the top. Where he went, and what he did when he got there, was a mystery. So the ruinous building was declared to be irredeemably haunted, the singular being who inhabited it was generally shunned as having too close a relationship with supernatural things to be regarded as a desirable acquaintance, and the ruin took the name in local history of "Johnny Boke's Castle."

Johnny was a character in the early annals of the Spa, and had a distinct personality of his own. He was an Irishman, as his name implies, and his nationality was placed beyond doubt by his rich brogue and bright mother-wit. Quite 60 years of age, he was upright as a dart, stood at least six feet three in his stockings, and his height was made still more striking from the fact that he was very spare and thin, and always wore the tall chimney-pot hat in vogue in those days. His mode of dress was as peculiar as his physical conformation. A particularly short waistcoat would show the ends of his braces tightly bracing up a pair of pants that were evidently made for a man half his length, fitting close to his lank figure, and reaching a little below the knee. It looked as if he had got into those pants and had put that waistcoat on when a boy, and had gone on growing till he was double the length without ever taking them off. Low shoes and white stockings completed the column, which was enveloped in a short-waisted frock coat of rusty brown cloth with tails reaching to his heels. Put a blackthorn shillalegh in his hand, clap a hat that looked like a foot-and-a-half of stove-piping on his head, and you have the singular make-up complete. Johnny's linen was always scrupulously clean, and he generally wore a loose turn-down

collar, with no necktie. He prided himself on being a "raal owld Irish gintleman," as he was in the habit of expressing it, and commanded respect among the boys about town owing to the certainty that his legs were twice as long as theirs, that he could consequently run twice as fast, was always ready and willing to do so, and was an expert in the use of the shillalegh when the running was over. How he got his living nobody knew. Any little service required of him he would perform provided it was not menial, his wants were probably few, and there were plenty of charitable people about.

But simple as his habits were, and though eccentric his ways, he was the inventor of an aphorism that can claim Leamington as its original source, and one which may safely take its place among the smart philosophic lessons of mankind. Johnny was once invited by a charitable lady, who then resided at Beauchamp House, to call upon her, as she had a little odd job or two that might be worth his attention. Johnny went. The service to be performed was to empty a dry dustbin—to take the ashes out and form a footpath of the cinders. This hardly came up to Johnny's idea of suitable employment for gentlemen. And yet the lady was an esteemed patroness to whom he was indebted for many previous kindnesses. To refuse would be to stop the flow of charity and close the bursary account. To acquiesce would be a sad blow to his pride. "Might I be afther bein' so bold, Madame, as to ask ye if ye've a fut rule to lind me for a moment?" enquired Johnny of the lady, as they both stood near the overflowing bin in the yard. "Oh, certainly, Mr. Boke!" was the courteous reply. A foot rule was enquired for, and a yard measure was brought by the butler. John took the rule, opened it, and measured the length of the bin with it. Then backing himself up against the wall, he removed his chimney-pot hat, and took his own measurement. "Six fut three inches!" said he, contemplatively, to himself, scratching his head. The lady looked on interestedly, so did the butler. "Bad luck to the diminsions!" said Johnny,

scratching his poll more fiercely than ever. "But I'll be afther thryin' it agin, shure—for it isn't the loikes o' me that can afford to throw up the bit o' work!" The rule was again run across the bin, and again Johnny took his own admeasurement against the wall. "Bedad, but that's worse than iver!" he exclaimed in a tone of disappointment. "Shure, and its brakin' me heart intoirely, Madame!" said he, doubling up the rule and turning to his patroness. "What is breaking your heart, Mr. Boke?" enquired the lady, kindly. "Shure, Madame," replied Johnny, in a lachrymose tone, as if tears were not far off, "isn't it brakin' me heart intoirely to foind meself too tall for the job!" The story was afterwards told by the butler, and it soon became a catchword about town for fastidious people to be twitted: "You are like Johnny Boke—too tall for the job!" Johnny drifted into religious mania during the later years of his life, and has long been at rest. His castle, too, has for years been numbered with the things that were. But the aphorism of which he was the inventor came to stay, and is with us still.

Another local character of note in his day and generation was a hairdresser named Foster, who had his place of business in Regent-street, opposite the Assembly Rooms. Mr. Foster announced himself as "from Truefitt's, Old Bond-street, London," and was among the early traders of the Spa, his name appearing in the directory of 1829. His likeness to King George IV. was most remarkable, and he was in the habit of heightening the illusion by dressing his hair as well as himself in careful imitation of his Majesty. Both in features and physique the resemblance was particularly striking. Hessian boots, doe-skin breeches, dress coat with gilt buttons, long blue-cloth military cloak fastened at the throat with heavy gilt buckle, massive malacca cane gold-mounted, richly-designed scarf and diamond pin, and wide-brimmed bell-top hat, with straw-coloured kid gloves. Thus attired, this local copyist of Royalty would walk with swinging gait up and down the Parade, to the amusement of those who knew him, and to the astonishment of those who knew

him not. He and another hairdresser—an old-town tonsurist named Bowden—were rivals in business, and they went different ways. Bowden's hobby was fly-fishing in the Leam, on the banks of which he got to be a very familiar figure. His methods were sometimes facetious, and he occasionally played off his humour upon his rival. The story went, that in 1829, a grand concert was given at the Music Hall by some high-class artists from London. The concert had begun, when in came Foster attired as King George IV., as usual. But his rival was there before him, and caused it to be privately conveyed to the manager of the concert, and whispered among the audience, that the King was present. The artists were promptly mustered to the front, and sang the National Anthem, the audience rising in a body!

This old Music Hall has many interesting traditions. The pile of buildings of which it forms a part was erected in 1820, initiated by Leamington's early dramatic favourite, Mr Elliston. The structure, unfortunately, was in advance of its time, and those who inaugurated the enterprise had to suffer for it. In 1830, Mr. Ebers had the Library and Reading-room, and in 1840 they were carried on by Mr. Enoch. The building was originally named the Parthenon, the Assembly Room being afterwards known as the Royal Music Hall. Here Jullien gave a series of his famous concerts, with Kœnig, Nicholson, and others whose names afterwards became prominent in musical annals. Kœnig's performance on the cornet, and Nicholson's achievements as a flautist, are recognised as early musical traditions of the Spa. Here the gigantic drum burst which Jullien had specially created for the National Anthem. The cylinder of this mammoth drum was 15 feet long and six in diameter, with a man at each end to do the thumping, each with a sort of muffled sledge-hammer. The strikers burst the machine at the Spa, and the local wits would have it that it was all due to the invigorating effects of Leamington water. Here Montem Smith made his appearance as an amateur, before he became eminent as a tenor singer—here Paganini played and Grisi and Mario sang—and here Camillo

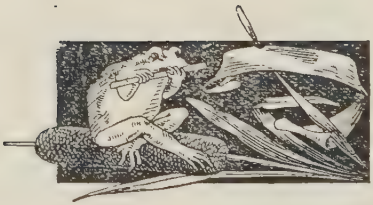
Sivori electrified an audience on Paganini's fiddle, after the maestro's death. Here Ole Bull's viol was made literally to speak, and here Braham thrilled his hearers with the "Death of Nelson." John Parry and Henry Phillips—Henry Russell and Fitzgerald—were among our early entertainers; the Distin Family of sax-hornists; the Brousil Family of lady violinists; Hoffman and his human instruments; Barnum and his General Tom Thumb;* Anderson of the original gun and bottle tricks; Woodin and his Olio of Oddities; and a whole crowd of men whose mission it was to tickle the world into the enjoyment of pleasant hours, found appreciation in this temple of music. Here it was that the original Ethiopian serenaders—the first of their kind in England—made an appearance after their season at St. James's Hall, in London. Pell, Harrington, White, Stanwood, and Germon were the names of the five who first made nigger-singing famous, and bets ran high at the Spa as to whether they were real negroes or shams. When Elliston died, musical interest became divided between the Music Hall and the Upper Assembly Rooms, of which Elliston's brother was for some time lessee. Here dramatic performances were given after the old Theatre in Bath-street was closed, and before the new Theatre in Clemens-street was opened. The opening of the Public Hall, in Windsor-street, about 1853, was marked by a striking incident. Mr. Warren, Q.C., author of "Ten thousand a Year," a brilliant orator, came specially to open the building with what was anticipated would be a great oratorical treat. When he rose he stood speechless, unable to utter a syllable, and sat down without saying a word. History does not afford many notable examples of a similar collapse, but the opening of the Public Hall at Leamington has to be recorded as one of them.

Two historic characters made Leamington their home in the early thirties. They were Prince Louis Napoleon, afterwards Emperor of the French, and Count Duboski, at one time commander-in-chief of such military forces as Poland possessed when subjugated by Russia. Duboski

*See appendix (*p.*)

was an exile—a Polish refugee; and Prince Napoleon found it expedient to take refuge in England until the lottery of affairs brought the diadem of rule to his hand. These two historic figures were familiar at Leamington, for some 10 years between 1830 and 1840. Duboski was always with us. He used to say he carried his life in his pocket, and that to leave Leamington would be to lose that pocket-piece. Napoleon's visits were intermittent, but when he came to the Spa he and Duboski were frequently together. Not publicly. There was an understanding that to be seen together meant danger to one or both of them. Their tryst was a small house in Russell-street—No. 10, where Duboski had lodgings—a humble rendezvous for a commander-in-chief of one European nation and an embryo Emperor of another to hold conference! Napoleon always came incognito. I have seen them together often—the Prince and Duboski—chatting and smoking at a window overlooking the street, with a big slate-coloured poodle dog perched on the table between them. The dog was Duboski's. My intimate acquaintance with the movements of this remarkable trio is due to the fact that an early thirst for knowledge took me to a private school immediately opposite, kept by Mr. Hickling, uncle of a subsequent superintendent of Warwick police. The Count was of colossal stature, magnificent physique, and noble presence, white-headed, hair closely cut, face cleanly shaven, with small snowy moustache on the upper lip. History gives us an outline of Prince Napoleon, who was his antithesis in every particular. The exploit at Strasburg took the Prince from Leamington in 1836. Then the Count was much alone, and was never seen with any other companion but his poodle dog. The second mad-cap enterprise at Boulogne kept the Prince away from the Spa in 1840, and the loneliness of Duboski was perpetuated by the subsequent internment of Napoleon in the fortress of Ham. Then, in 1848, on the flight of Louis Phillippe from France, the Prince made his final exit from Leamington, to become Emperor of the French in 1852, leaving his old companion Duboski to die among us an exile and

alone. I know not where the Count's last resting-place is, but his refuge for years at the Spa was the humble dwelling I have indicated. That house may well become historic, for with it must always be associated the ambitious recrudescence which ended in one of the most disastrous and pathetic chapters of European history.



CHAPTER XXIV.

Troubled Waters—Belfries and Bells—The Old Church—Gunpowder Plot—Wedded Warwick—Nelson's Paten Opaque Gelatine—Working a Charm—The Mesmerist Outwitted—An Industrious Couple.

AMONG the local memorabilia of Leamington is recorded the fact that on the 4th of June, 1811, "there was such an inundation in the village as laid all the lower town under water, and the company which had assembled at the old Bowling Green to celebrate the King's birthday were obliged to retreat to the second floor, as the ball-room was upwards of six inches deep of water." The river Leam is evidently one of those uncertain streams which, in the old days, after heavy rains, was given to eccentricities, for I myself remember, more than once, the bridge that joins the old town with the new being impassable, except for horses and vehicular traffic, the water having risen as high towards the Parade as Dormer-place. It may be unknown to many that what was called the new Victoria bridge over the Leam, opened by Dr. Jephson in 1840, was simply a widening of the arches of the old structure originally erected in 1807, with the addition of a more ornamental parapet. Some time in the year 1841 there was a rising of the Leam till the water reached the crown of the central arch, and the *annexe* on the western side of the bridge ran great danger of being swept away. It was formed of transverse iron girders, which, with the superincumbent portion of roadway and pavement they supported, were lifted by the swelling stream as the water surged underneath, and the new addition to the bridge was only saved from destruction by the promptitude of the town surveyor—I think his name was Dickins—who had a quantity of paving stones and iron posts carted from the stores of the Town Commissioners at the old Town Hall, and

placed in the centre of the threatened portion of the structure. This kept everything in its place till the flood subsided. I think the same Mr. Dickins had something to do with the arrangements connected with the demolition of the old parish church and the beginning of the new erection I used to see him frequently about the works, giving instructions, and remember he had a dog—a large liver-and-white spaniel—that was in the habit of following him up and down ladders to a considerable height—a most unusual thing for a dog even to attempt, much less to accomplish successfully. The first step taken, I remember, with regard to the then momentous change from the old church to the new, was to construct a wooden belfry for the peal of six bells, when they came to be removed from the old church tower. The timber structure was placed just inside the churchyard, at its west entrance from Church-walk, near the old well, and close up to the front of the historical cottages of wattle and thatch that then abutted on to the churchyard, and really formed part of it. The sexton and bellringer at that time, and for many years previous, was named Taylor, and I think he lived in one of the famous group of tumble-down cots that formed the interesting link between ancient and modern Leamington, as did also another old parochial servitor named Goodman. It used to be my special delight to creep into the old church belfry—the quaint old tower of the ancient structure, the centre of so many old-time memories—when the bells were chiming for week-day service, or at more fascinating moments when they rang their joyous peal on coming Christmastide. The walls of the old belfry, I remember, were covered with arithmetical figures showing innumerable changes to be performed on bells and giving some famous peals that had been rung there, with the dates of their performance and the names of those who performed them. I have seen Taylor chime, singlehanded, the six bells for week-day service. He would fasten the ropes to the floor, control two with his feet, one in the bend of each arm, and one with each hand. The performance may appear simple to experts, but to

me the recollection of it is a novelty. When they began the demolition of the church in 1839, I think a mason named Lupton was the first to apply the crowbar I was looking on at the operation, and remember feeling that something was about to be done that would deprive me of that which had to be associated with happy memories. I look back upon those memories now as some of the most cherished of my life.

When the then vicar, the Rev. Robert Downes, preached his farewell sermon at the old place, there were many outward manifestations of sorrow and regret, for he was a man beloved by his parishioners. What attracted me most was a short-hand writer, who sat near the pulpit taking down the sermon. His name was Lewis, and he was a teacher of the winged art—the first who practised in Leamington. I well remember the vicar's successor, the Rev. John Craig, preaching his first sermon. Tall, slim-built, and delicate-looking, with keen and earnest eyes, slightly stooping in the shoulders, querelous gait, affected mannerisms and broken enunciation, the new Vicar presented a striking contrast to the old, and early impressions, I remember, were not favourable. Three notable disturbances of the service took place in the earlier days, before the new Vicar came. One was the occasion of a fire at the shop of a trader in Clemens-street, to whom the news was brought while in church, on hearing which many of the congregation withdrew, and the service abruptly terminated. This I saw. The other two events came to me by tradition. One was this. The usual silence reigned during the sermon one Sunday, and the tranquility was disturbed by a sharp query from a pew occupied by the slumbering landlady of one of the most popular hostelries in the town: "Another glass broke; who pays for that?" The third event was as follows. Before the days of the organ and Mr. Elliston, the singing at the Parish Church was led by a clarionet and base-viol high up in the rood-loft. Those were the nights of dip-candles. The bass-viol, it is recorded, was in the habit, when the light grew dim, of snuffing the dip with his fingers and

putting the snuff in an old steel tobacco-box he kept handy for the purpose, shutting the box with a snap to obviate objectionable fragrance. An ingenious imp once introduced gunpowder into that steel box. The congregation left in a body soon after, under the impression that an earthquake was on. It was not till the advent of Mr. H. T. Elliston, as organist of the Parish Church, that this eccentric state of things in the rood-loft came to an end. This is confirmed in Moncrieff's guide for 1829. "Mr. Henry T. Elliston," says the chronicler, "officiates as organist of the Church, and, by charitably attending to the vocal tuition of the children belonging to the Leamington Sunday School, he has completely put to the rout the eternal clarionet, fiddle, and leathern lungs of some half-dozen remorseless old choristers, that have so long splitted the ears of the groundlings by murdering Sternhold and Hopkins, and by inflicting on the congregation all the tortures of inharmonious and distorted psalmody." Mr. Elliston was the first to introduce a properly-trained choir and a higher-class music into the services at the Parish Church; but, if my recollection serves me, there were those in the parish who objected even to this as an unwarranted innovation on the old and familiar order of things. It was not till the Rev John Craig took charge of parochial affairs that choral singing at the old Church reached anything like a cultured and perfected state. The reformation was then comprehensive and complete.

The bridge that spans the Avon at Emscote, and may well be handed down to posterity as the wedding-ring with which Leamington and Warwick were married and made one, was erected in 1830. The first stone was laid by Sir Gray Skipwith, Bart., M.P., on the day of that gentleman's first nomination as a candidate for the county of Warwick, and it was opened to the public on the 7th of May, 1832, by Sir Eardley-Wilmot, Bart., then chairman of the Bench of Magistrates. On either side of the Avon, in the earlier days, at the point of junction, were meadows of rich grazing land, through which the river meandered. The stream was crossed at Rock

Mills, which lies in the valley on the north side of the bridge, and the road continued thence by a circuitous bend towards New Milverton. The new structure was popularly known as Portobello Bridge, taking its name, probably, from the Portobello Tavern and Tea Gardens that were then situated at its foot on the Warwick side. When the marriage of Leamington and Warwick took place, in 1830, and the bridge that consummated their union was completed, the roads converging at that point were raised to the higher level, and a new road was cut leading thence direct to the New town of the Royal Spa. It was many years before that road ran through anything but green fields fringed with wooded plantations.

About the first name in my early recollection that seemed most prominent in establishing commercial relations between the newly-wedded towns of Leamington and Warwick was that of Nelson. I have a very clear recollection of Nelson and White, chemists and druggists, of No. 3, Lower Parade. It was here that the famous physician, Dr. Henry Jephson, gave that lesson in cobbling to which I have already referred. I have also an equally clear recollection of Nelson and Herring, of No. 33, Bath-street. It was here, in a laboratory in Regent-place, that Leamington salts were first manufactured by evaporation from the celebrated saline waters and first placed on the market as an article of commerce. But the event which, of all Nelsonian recollections, went to unite more distinctly the commercial and trading relations between Leamington and Warwick, was the foundation of Nelson's Gelatine Works, at Emscote—a sort of half-way trading centre that brought the two into combination. I claim to have taken no insignificant part in starting those now famous works on their prosperous mission nearly 60 years ago. That is to say, I printed the first circular by which the gelatine was made known to mankind, as well as the first label that was gummed at the end of the first packet placed on the market. It would be difficult to tell how many circulars and how many end-labels I helped to print after the first. All I know is that Nelson's Gelatine Works at Emscote kept one

press at a printing office at Leamington pretty well employed from one year's end to another, that the craving for Nelson's gelatine on the part of the British public and the public of all nations was insatiable, that no signature was better known to humanity than that of George Nelson, which was to be found on each packet of gelatine in whatever form it might assume, and that, without such signature, no gelatine throughout the whole habitable globe could be found worth having. Those were the primitive days of press-work by hand—often with a blistered hand—long before labour-saving machinery came into operation at Leamington. Hundreds of thousands of labels had to be printed by the most laborious methods when this historic gelatine was first launched upon the markets of the world, those hundreds of thousands I and another had to print in our boyhood, and I verily believe that, somewhat after the manner of marking things with hot iron, I have still an unobliterated outline of the ancient legend, "Nelson's Patent Opaque Gelatine," stamped upon my brain, still the notable signature, "George Nelson,' imprinted upon my heart, with the unalterable conviction strongly engrafted in my mind that without that particular signature no gelatine in the world could possibly be genuine, and, finally, that it would be utterly useless to look for directions anywhere else but at "this end of the packet!" Not very long since, I remember, one of Nelson's *employés*—Ann Hart—was pleasantly reminded of her jubilee of continuous work under the firm, by some kindly acts of consideration on the part of her employers and fellow-workers. Fifty years in the same employment is a fair indication of generous treatment on the one hand and faithful servitude on the other. It is pleasant to recall these instances of trading enterprise and long industrial servitude—these relations of unbroken trust between capital and labour—extending over so wide a range of years. It is the best answer that can be given to the spirit of anarchy that is abroad, and such results, as we find them emphasised by experience, prove by what means individual success can alone be reached, and the only

way in which communities can safely and securely be built up.

The growth of the "Town and Trade" of the Spa was particularly striking during the seven years between 1830 and 1837. In the former years the population was such that only 17 milliners were required as tire-women for the female portion of it, but seven years later the number of milliners and dressmakers had increased to 46. The population required makers of male apparel to the number of 16 in 1830, while in 1837 there were more than double that number. The following appeared in the *Courier* in December, 1836, as part of a review of one of Merridew's guides then just published. It gives in amusing rhyme a list of tailors in the town at the time, as shown in the directory appended to the guide:—

Here's Beasley, Brown, Burgess, and Bumpus,
Who when tipsy can kick up a rumpus.
And Butler, and Clewley, and Cole—
Odd fish, but not flat as a sole.
And Eccles, and English, and Gopsill,
Who when they drink grog don't a drop spill.
And Goodhall, and Jennings, and Jones—
Crack tailors, not breakers of stones.
And Margetts, and Mellor, and Millburn,
On Sundays do all get their chins shorn.
Master Naul, Mister Nicks, and O'Connor,
Who doubtless are all men of honour.
Will Palmer, Bill Parsons, and Pearson,
Each fancies himself quite a fierce 'un.
And Randle, and Shakespeare, and Smith,
Though thin are all brimfull of pith.
Tom Talbot, and Weatherstone, Willoughby—
Rock the cradle and gently cry lullaby.
And lastly comes stout William Wright,
Who is very far short of a sprite.

The first soda-water manufacturers in the town were Gossage and Co., chemists, Bath-street. The first ginger-beer manufacturer on anything like a large scale was Johnson. One Mrs. Hall, of New Milverton, was a famous purveyor of this beverage before Johnson entered the field. The first to introduce chimney-sweeping by machinery to supersede climbing boys, was a barber named Thompson, living in Tavistock-street, who also

had the reputation of being able to cure the tooth-ache by "charming." When a child I once witnessed his mode of doing this. He would place his patient in a chair in the middle of the room, walk round the chair three times the way of the sun, then three times the reverse way, making passes with his hand in the direction of the patient, all the while muttering certain incantations. He would then stop in front of the sitter, throw the patient's head well back, make certain other passes, then cross his hands and mutter further incantations. The patient must then leave without having spoken a word, and no money must change hands If either of these conditions were disregarded, the "charm" would be broken, and the tooth ache more violently than ever! Thompson's reputation was well established for having never failed in sending his patients home relieved of the pains they brought with them. The first to introduce mesmerism into Leamington was a public lecturer named Vincent Hall, and spiritualism was all the rage for some time afterwards. A son of one of the local builders, named Pinder, tried the new idea on one of his father's workmen, on a pay-day at the Fox and Vivian, at which well-known hostelry several of the early builders used to pay their men. The operator turned on the bump of combativeness, and was unable to turn it off again, whereupon the patient got him in a corner and nearly pounded the life out of him. It was said to have been a plot on the part of rival building interests, but no more mesmeric experiments were ever tried at the Fox and Vivian. A very early trader at the Spa was an old lady who kept a sweet-stall at the north corner of what is now the Linden Avenue. She was the wife of an old army pensioner, and their home was at Warwick. That they should both have made a two-mile journey, night and morning, for many years, carrying their stock-in-trade backwards and forwards with them in all weathers, is a record of plodding industry that stands to their credit. What would be thought of an apple-stall at the corner of the Linden Avenue now?

CHAPTER XXV.

Satchwell's Widow—Our First Bumper—Flavel's Vapour Bath—Tom Tidler's Ground—Railway Development—Early Builders — Royalty and the Spa — Leamington First Favourite.

I HAVE found no record of the death of Benjamin Satchwell's widow, of whom very little is known, and that little comes to us from the writings of the local historian, Bissett, to whom Leamington owes so much of its early history.* Mrs. Satchwell was eight years younger than her husband, as I gather from Bissett, in his guide of 1816. Writing in that year he says: "Mrs. Satchwell is now 76 years of age, and as chatty and cheerful as ever." Her husband died in 1810, in the 78th year of his age. The widow of our earliest pioneer must have been an interesting, if not a remarkable local character. Three years before he published his guide of 1816, Bissett portrayed that character in verse, and the lines, appended herewith, are the only glimpse we have of the good lady to whom they refer:—

Within the adjacent cot you'll find
Old Satchwell's widow, blythe though blind,
She, brisk as any lively belle,
Can every village story tell;
Or in her honest Ben's plain verse
The history of the Spa rehearse.
Can tell what nobles first came here.
Where first they lodged, what homely cheer
Such courtly guests first met withal
In wattled cot with mud-built wall.
Who first had sash or panelled door,
Who sported first a boarded floor.
What rural rustic ruled the roast.
What fair was then the favourite toast.
What village dames to *fetes* gave law
When their M.C. was Mistress Shaw.

*See appendix (*q*.)

When at the Green gay Scotia's star
Led down the dance with Dr. Parr.
When tripped a Landor and a Leigh
To grace our ball-room revelry.
She well remembers, and can tell,
What groups of yore flocked to the well,
When in a ditch the water ran
Ere noble Aylesford first began,
When Health's fair goddess raised its fame,
To erect the fane that bears his name.
She knows full well the spot of ground
Where erst the second spring was found.
Where honest Satchwell made a stand,
And laved the liquid in his hand,
While Abbotts doubtedly did eye it,
Ran for a cup with which to try it,
And happy with the prize he got
Erected baths upon the spot.
Dame Satchwell's memory's clear and sound—
Her knowledge, for her sphere, profound,
At all times cheerful, frank, and kind—
Never repines though lame and blind.
She'll chant a stave or sing a song,
With tales amuse the whole day long.
So full of chat—so full of glee—
You'll rarely find at seventy-three.
A ready wit unites with these,
With every latent wish to please,
Which renders all her tales the dearer,
And proves more pleasing to the hearer.

With such examples of health and longevity as Benjamin Satchwell and his widow themselves supply, the advantages of Leamington as a health-resort need no further recommendation. To "chant a stave or sing a song" at 73, to have a memory "clear and sound" at that great age, to be able to "amuse with tales the whole day long," and to do this in the face of lameness and blindness, speaks volumes as to the hygienic causes which led to this mental soundness in spite of physical infirmity. In 1814, too, the old well was in the keeping of an octogenarian, Mrs. Webb, who, says Bissett, writing in 1816, "is aged, yet animated." Mrs. Webb was the first to occupy the cottage erected near the original spring by order of the Earl of Aylesford, as one result of his visit to the village Spa in 1803. I should imagine this good lady to have been the very earliest attendant

upon visitors at the well, if not the first who officially rendered service in that capacity, in the days when the mineral water merely trickled from the bank into a ditch in the open field, and long before a second spring was discovered. I am confirmed in this belief by Bissett, who, writing in 1814, says: "The cottage at the well has been occupied by the same family for four generations, and under this ancient and humble roof Mrs. Webb resides, her daughter and grandchildren acting as pumpers." It would be about this time that visitors began to make Leamington their home as a place of residence for the season. "The late celebrated Duchess of Gordon, with her husband, and the Duke and Duchess of Bedford," says Bissett, "were the first personages of rank who took houses for the season and made their home permanent here." Many interesting anecdotes have been related of the Duchess of Gordon. Here is one that was recorded at the time in the annals of the village Spa. "One Sunday, on going to church rather later than usual, her Grace found every pew full, and being unwilling to disturb the congregation, she quietly took her station on the lower step of the stairs leading up to the singers' gallery, where she remained during the whole of the service."

In 1815 a Russian nobleman, his Excellency Major-General Sabloukoff, with his family and a numerous suite, stayed in Leamington during the whole of the winter, and a noteworthy incident in connection with his stay is worth recording. A Russian vapour bath, of peculiar construction, was wanted by him, but no such luxury at that time could be got in the village, and this threatened to shorten the visit of the family from Russia. The necessary appliance, however, was promptly forthcoming, almost before its absence had been noticed, and on it being fixed for the special service of Major-General Sabloukoff, that nobleman frankly declared that it was a great improvement on the vapour bath in use in his own country. The improved bath was designed by Mr. W. Flavel, inventor of the patent Leamington kitchener, who subsequently made still further improvements in

the Muscovite model, and fitted one up for the use of visitors generally. This had the result of attracting several Russian families of distinction to the Spa, and led to their lengthened stay. Mr. Flavel was one of the earliest of our enterprising trade pioneers. He was a man of striking personality, very tall, studious-looking, and of splendid physique. That he possessed the happy combination of inventive genius and unusual mechanical capacity the vitality found in his early work and the perpetuation of it fully testify. The Leamington kitchener he invented ranks among the most perfect and best of its kind.

With the extension of railway communication from Coventry to Leamington in 1844, the Royal Spa began a new and important era. The original terminus of the first connecting link with Coventry, on the London and North-Western line, was for some years near New Milverton, and the extension was continued to Rugby in 1851. In 1853 the Great Western line to Birmingham was opened, and the two central stations were fixed where they now are. Near the site of the London and North-Western Station the All England Eleven played their first cricket match at the Spa about the year 1842. I remember I was told off to print the score on the field, press and type being placed there in a tent for the purpose. I think it was Lillywhite who had the management of the cards. What a tremendous rush there was for the printed card showing the final scores! Next morning I was first in the tent, and found the turf thickly strewn with silver and copper coins—a veritable Tom Tidler's ground. I was in the act of gathering in the harvest when Lillywhite entered the tent. "Ah!" said he, "the early bird gets the worm. How much?" I deposited the treasure-trove on the little printing-press, and Lillywhite gave me half-a-crown for my trouble. "We always drop a lot of coin in the last rush for cards," said he, "but," he added, "we don't always get it again!"

The site of the Great Western Station is between the two avenues that once formed the carriage drive from the main road—the Old Warwick-road—to the old Manor House, formerly occupied by

the Wise family till they went to reside at Shrubland Hall, the family seat hard by. Exactly where the station now is a range of houses was planned in 1833. The builders were Messrs. Peace and Hill, who secured 40 acres of land in the vicinity for building purposes. Two or three of the houses were completed at the west end of the range, the remainder of the handsome pile was in course of construction towards the eastern extremity, and two gateway approaches to the terraces—one at each end—were built, when the work was suddenly stopped, and the unfinished portion remained in ruins for some years.* The range was called Eastnor-terrace, and the two gateways were inside the base of the "umbrageous semi-circle" formed by the two avenues. These gateways are now the entrances to the station from the Old Warwick-road, and the station itself stands where Eastnor-terrace formerly stood. In 1829-33, the resident builders, carpenters, and timber-merchants engaged in building operations at the Spa were E. Clark, M. Chinn, John Toone, John Millman, H. Nock, E. Pinder, Buddle and Son, J. Barnwell, J. Swain, Charles Bailey, John Nicks, W. Watkin, J. Overton, J. Treadgold, R. Hodkisson, R. Rousham, W. Russell, James Brown, T. Capes, J. H. Laking, S. Pearse, R. Pratt, J. Smith, T. Stacey. E. Thorncroft, J. Webb, and W. Wamsley. Later there came Mr. Beach, Mr. Wincote, Mr. Sparrow, and others. Mr. Sparrow subsequently left Leamington and carried on business at Northampton.

The earliest Leamington Directory I have seen is one published at Coventry in 1827. I there find some of the first of the professional and trading portion of the community, who settled at the village in its early days. Mrs. and Miss Elliston Torre are professors of dancing, and reside in Bath-street; Mr. William Rider is an artist and drawing-master, and lived near Ranelagh Gardens; Mr. W. L. Meyrick was a teacher of the violin, Windsor-street; Mr. Charles Elston was a teacher of the flute, and Mr. John Elston of the harp and pianoforte. This was an old musical family. Mr. Elston, sen., then lived at 13, Bath-

See appendix (r.)

street, but afterwards went to the Lower Parade, where he was in business for many years, and whose collection of old local prints was extensive and unique. Mr. F. Marshall was teacher of the pianoforte and singing. He was organist at the Episcopal Chapel, and resided at 32, Church-street. Mr. J. Hewett taught the flute and guitar. He was a son, I think, of Mr. Hewett, at the Library, Upper Assembly Rooms. Mr. Owen Owen was a harpist, and lived in Clemens-street. Mr. C. Bernard was the first and only organ builder, his address, 3, Church-terrace. Ladies' seminaries were kept by Miss Walker, Newbold Comyn House; Mrs. Taylor, Greville House, Regent-street; Mrs. Startin, Warwick House, Windsor-street; Mrs. Barnett, Brunswick House; Mrs. Barrs and Miss Hawkins, Chandos-street; the Misses Gore, Rosefield House, Regent-street; the Misses Lowick and Purden, Bertie-circus; and the Misses Smith, Beauchamp-terrace. Of gentlemen's academies there were three: Mr. Davis, Portland-street; Mr. Holmes, Portland-street; and Mr. Smith, High-street. The attorneys were: Mr. D. W. Burbury, Bedford-street; Mr. Empson, 5, Clemens-street; Mr. S. Haynes, Park-street; Messrs. Lucas and Butterfield, Bath-place; Mr. Page, Tachbrook-road; Messrs. Paterson and Russell, Church-street; Mr. Robert Poole, 32, Park-street; and Mr. J. B. Tovey, 7, Ranelagh-terrace. The auctioneers were Mr. Geo. Carter, Royal Parade, High-street; Mr. J. Allen, Clemens-street; and Mr. T. Rawlings, 112 Warwick-street. The booksellers were Messrs. Ebers, Fairfax, Hewett, Lubbock, Merridew, Morris, and Pollard. There were four breweries: Mr. Coutts, Newmarket Inn, Tavistock-street; R. Dee, King's Arms, Warwick-street; E. Woodfield, top of Wise-street; and G. Finney, Half Moon, Satchwell-street. In this directory Mr. Henry Horwood, chemist, is in business at No. 40, Regent-street, and Mr. Lloyd is described as being in the same line of business on "the Royal Parade." Mr. Lloyd was succeeded by Mr. Newby, chemist. From this description it would appear that in those days the part of High-street in which Mr. Newby's place of business was situated, namely,

from the corner occupied by Mr. Sowley to the corner of Church-street, was included in the Royal Parade, by which name the High-street, from the old *Courier* Office, to Copps's Hotel, was then known. There were five confectioners: T. Hilsdon, 16, Lower Parade; M. Lawrance, Regent-street; the Misses Roby, Clemens-street; and R. Wheal, Gloucester-street. M. Lawrance afterwards went to the Lower Parade. In this directory the address of one of the ancient wattled cots near the old Church, to which reference has been made, is given as "Church Yard." This confirms the statement previously made, that these particular cottages were situated within the churchyard boundary, and actually formed part of the burial-ground. I remember them so situated, and there is little doubt that they were all that remained of the very first structures erected in the village.

The first Royal visitor to the Spa was George IV., who, when Prince Regent, was staying at Warwick Castle, when, on the 10th of September, 1819, His Royal Highness paid a personal visit to the Spa in an open carriage, accompanied by the Countess of Warwick, the Marchioness of Conyngham, and attended by a numerous suite. "After visiting the libraries, Pump Rooms, and Assembly Rooms, and expressing the highest gratification," says Moncrieff, "the Royal visitor returned to dine at Warwick Castle, leaving his permission for Williams's new hotel to be named after him—the Regent. A meeting was called of the inhabitants and visitors, at which an address was unanimously voted, which was presented by the Master of the Ceremonies and a deputation to the illustrious personage, at Warwick Castle; and his Royal Highness was pleased to return, through Sir B. Bloomfield, a most flattering reply." On the 30th of July, 1822, her Royal Highness the Princess Augusta arrived and took up her residence at Leamington. "The streets leading to the residence prepared for the Royal visitor," says the chronicler of the time, "were crowded with spectators, anxious to testify their loyalty and attachment to the Royal Family, and their joy in witnessing the entry of the first

Royal resident that had graced the Spa." The record adds that "Her Royal Highness alighted at No. 9, Upper Parade, since called Augusta House, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the assembled concourse of spectators, and was received by the Masters of the Ceremonies of the Old and New Towns." Three days later, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester arrived, being "received with the most lively and cordial demonstrations of joy, and escorted to their residence in Regent-street, since called Gloucester House." In the same year, on the 7th of July, the Prince and Princess of Denmark, who at the time were making a tour of England, stopped and dined at Copps's Royal Hotel. In 1836, her Majesty, then Princess Victoria and heir-presumptive to the Throne, visited Leamington for the first time with her mother, the Duchess of Kent. The Sunday schools were assembled on a temporary sloping gallery at the top of the Parade, and when the Royal party arrived near the spot the children rose and sang the National Anthem. The carriage in which the Princess and her mother sat was drawn up, I remember, immediately in front of the Clarendon Hotel, there was a vast concourse of spectators, and the appearance of the Parade, seen from the gallery on which I stood among the school children, was a picture not easily forgotten. And then, when the children rose and began singing, the chorus was gradually taken up by the multitude, till it broadened out into one vast swelling anthem. The Princess—a slight, delicate-looking girlish figure—stood up in the carriage during the singing, her eyes intently fixed on the little melodists in the gallery, and when the anthem was ended she waved her handkerchief towards the little ones in token of her approval. Soon after this, ancient "Leamington Priors" became, by special favour of the Queen, "Royal Leamington Spa," a further mark of Royal favour was accorded in 1875 by the gift of a Charter of Incorporation, and while it may truthfully be said that her Majesty has no more loyal town in her dominions than the Royal Borough she created, there is no health resort in the Kingdom that stands higher in Royal estimation.

No fairer jewel sparkles in thy Crown,
O Queen and Empress! No more lustrous gem
Helps to make luminous thy diadem.
No hearts more loyal to thy rule have grown.

As in a mirror smiles will smiles beget,
So have thy favours love in us begot—
Loyal and lasting, that shall waver not—
Nor harbour change—true as the suns that rise and set.

J. C. M.

FINIS.

APPENDIX.

(*a*.) The author dedicates his work: "To Henry Jephson, Esq., whose ardent solicitude for the welfare of Leamington is ever in exercise, and whose private friendship is of value beyond estimate, these pages are dedicated with admiration and esteem." The writer speaks of the assistance he received, among others, "from Mrs. Potterton, daughter of the late William Abbotts; Mr. Cullis, an old inhabitant of the place; also Mr. Jackson, whose pencil supplied the original views." The author added that the ground he had chosen was then untrodden, "no one having hitherto narrated the unexampled enlargement of the place." The work was printed by Arthur Youngman, 12, Gloucester-street, and the profits were devoted to the funds of the Warneford Hospital. Referring to the Old Dog Inn, Mr. Hopper says: "Not far from the Bowling Green stood a small inn called the Dog. This house stands, with its plain bow windows, to the east of Copps's Hotel, and, as one of the two inns in existence before the place rose out of its humble character, is an object of curiosity." Of William Abbotts Mr. Hopper writes: "He constructed the first bath, in Bath-street, began in 1784 and opened in 1787; he also built the first new house of the infant settlement, and opened it as an hotel in 1793, after encountering great opposition." Referring to Mr. Walhouse, whose name frequently occurs in the early history of the village, Mr. Hopper remarks: "He was a gentleman of independent fortune, and resided at hotels." His name also appears in Mr. Dawkes's diary as having been present at the laying of the first stone of New Leamington in 1808, referred to in the body of the work.

(*b*) Mr. Pratt is the writer here referred to, the author of the first guide-book to the village Spa. This was not, strictly speaking, a guide to the

town and district, but an account of the Spa Charity founded by Benjamin Satchwell, with notes and comments on the Spa, its then residents, and the attractions of the village and surrounding neighbourhood. When Mr. Pratt's pamphlet—for it was little more than a pamphlet—was written in 1811 and published in 1812, Benjamin Satchwell had but recently died, and the writer of the work knew him intimately. Speaking of the efforts of Satchwell on behalf of the Spa Charity prior to his death, Mr. Pratt gives some interesting details of the self-imposed task which the Founder of the Charity had set himself to perform, and the way he performed it. "The previous account of the Charity," he says, "has been done in detail by the first projector of it, and it is not necessary for me to recapitulate what he has already done so well, but I may state that during the lifetime of that worthy man it was among the great and constant delights of his heart to write a full and correct statement of all receipts, disbursements, and cases dealt with by the Charity, in order that justice might be done between those who contributed to this excellent institution and the recipients of their benevolence. This mode of proceeding, from a few names of patrons and patients, almost imperceptibly grew into a large manuscript volume a considerable time before the good man's decease. Since that event, his successors in the meritorious office have followed his example, in so much that the list of contributions, being almost daily enlarged, is become scarcely portable. It cannot, in truth, be supposed that any part of the company at a public dinner table could bestow the necessary time to examine a book of this kind. The consequence of this has hitherto been either that the President at each hotel has generally taken upon himself the trouble of explanation, or the recent comers have been requested to turn over the leaves of an unwieldly book amidst the hurry and confusion inevitable on such occasions." Referring more immediately to Benjamin Satchwell, Mr. Pratt writes : "It has been said that the man who plants a single tree to embellish, or

sets an oak-acorn towards defending the country, is to be ranked among its benefactors, whatever be his condition in life, and to the above-mentioned Founder of the Leamington Spa Charity this praise is unquestionably due, as he not only first projected, but to the utmost extent of his power, within the sphere of his action, brought it into notice and carried it into beneficial effect." Mr. Pratt adds: "The Founder was warmly supported, assisted, and patronised by the Rev. James Walhouse," and in a footnote the writer says: "This gentlemen is to be placed amongst the most early, indefatigable, and unwearied patrons of this institution, as will be seen in the records of its progress preserved by the Founder." It would be interesting to know if those records are still preserved.

(*c.*) Pratt's original guide, apart from its historical importance, was somewhat of a curiosity. The author had a quaint way of taking his readers into his confidence On the title-page is a note, emphasised by three asterisks, which clearly indicated the belief in the author's mind that the local public were going to get value for their money. "Every person," he says, in the least acquainted with "the present expenses of paper, printing, *et cetera*, must be aware that a pamphlet containing an equal number of pages with this, upon whatever subject, could not be purchased for less than half-a-crown; nor, if the engravings were included, under three shillings." The pamphlet contained 67 pages, and the proceeds "are to be devoted to the Spa Charity, and will be paid into the hands of Mr. John Champion, the treasurer." The copy of this original guide-book from which I quote is rendered additionally interesting from the fact that on the last leaf is the author's written autograph, with the printed intimation that "his efforts will be to make his guide correct," and that, "as a guarantee of its correctness, every copy will bear his signature. There is also a letter gummed inside the fly-leaf of the particular copy referred to, which may have some historical interest. It is as follows:—"Stoneleigh, 17th July, 1829. Rev. Sir,—I should be very glad to oblige your friends in any

way I could, but when the family is at the Abbey I never interfere, nor do I know that any person ever has been admitted to see the house when the family was at home. I am, Rev. Sir, your obedient servant, Thomas Chapman." Inside the cover of the pamphlet, gummed on the fly-leaf, is a newspaper cutting, in reference to a meeting that had been held of the Trustees of the Rugby School, the Earl of Denbigh in the chair, to inquire into certain reports reflecting on the management of the institution. Resolutions were unanimously passed exonerating the Executive, and signed by the Earl of Denbigh, the Earl of Aylesford, Earl Howe, Sir Grey Skipwith, Bart, D. S. Dugdale, A. Grimes, F. Lawley, W. Holbech, and H. Wise; and Dr. Wood is enjoined to "circulate a declaration embodying the purport of the resolutions, when he sends out the Christmas accounts." In an "address to the public," the author says he "reserves what more he has to say for the regular guide to be published in May next." He quaintly adds: "My guide will be the first published. Two others are talked of, but not yet seen."

(*d*.) New Year's Day was always a busy time at Welch's old place in Gloucester-street. It was then that the seasonable benefaction of Mrs. H. C. Wise was dispensed to the poor of the town in the shape of joints of meat. These were all nicely arranged on a long table of planks on trestles reaching half-way down the street, the board being covered with a snowy cloth, and each joint placed ready for the recipient, the table being gaily garnished with holly and mistletoe, and evergreens, from end to end. The joints were handed in rotation to those for whom they were intended, and Mrs. Wise was almost invariably present to say a kind word to those about her, by whom, and by the poor generally throughout the town, that estimable lady was held in high estimation for her many benevolent acts through a long series of years.

(*e*.) The 2nd edition of Pratt's Guide was even a greater novelty than the first. It not only professed to guide the stranger all over Warwickshire, but half the book was filled up with "Remarks on the prospect of universal peace," owing to the

"official confirmation of the dethronement, abdication, resignation, or by whatever other name the downfall of Buonaparte and his dynasty may be designated!" There are 12 pages devoted to "A View of the Past," 10 or 12 to "A Look at Home," eight to "A Look Abroad," a long discussion on empirics in general, four pages headed "The author's apology for the foregoing discussion," and then the writer begins to talk about "Leamington Village!" He says the first list of the cures performed by the waters was taken by Benjamin Satchwell, and was then in the possession of Mr. George Birch, surgeon. He had seen the list and verified the cures, which was, he writes, "a convincing proof of their extraordinary efficacy." The author pays a tribute to the kindness of Mr. Willes, of Newbold Comyn, who was "always ready to throw open his demesne to the public," and from whom he had "always experienced the greatest kindness and consideration." In this edition are produced "the lines engraved on the tomb of the Father of the Village and the founder of one of its best institutions—on the monument erected by his eldest daughter in Leamington churchyard."

(*f*.) The cottages here referred to lay back in a wide enclosure, with a low wall frontage extending from Spencer-street to the two large houses at the south-west foot of the bridge. The cottages were subsequently known as Egerton's Livery Stables, of which Mr. John Egerton was the proprietor. A feature of the livery yard was a tame fox chained to a kennel, and the place was one of the then famous centres for obtaining the requisite mounts for an equally famous hunting county Mr. Egerton had a personal recollection of Benjamin Satchwell. His father, who was coachman at Offchurch Bury, used to send John, then very young, to fetch the letters from the old Post-office in Mill-street, and it was there he often saw Satchwell, who was postmaster at the time. Mr. Egerton died on December 20th, 1892, in his eighty-ninth year, and previous to his death he identified a pair of spectacles which he remembered to have seen Benjamin Satchwell wear in the old days. These spectacles were

then in the possession of Mr. Tracy Turnerelli, who confirmed the foregoing facts by the following letter, which appeared in the *Leamington Courier* shortly before Mr. Egerton's death: — "Sir, — Mr. John Egerton, formerly riding master and keeper of livery stables, now aged 88! of Bath-place, Leamington, who knew Ben Satchwell intimately, has certified to me that the spectacles—the subject of so much comment in the Press — really belonged to Benjamin Satchwell, and that he has seen them constantly worn by him when he used, as a boy, to go to Leamington from Offchurch Bury to get his father's letters at the Post-office, then kept by Ben Satchwell. He remembers, also, that these spectacles were attached to a dirty piece of string which went round Ben Satchwell's head, and that the old Postmaster used to raise them up and throw them back on his forehead when he spoke to him and gave him the change out of the many shillings he brought him as payment for the letters. All this now sufficiently attests not only that Benjamin Satchwell did wear spectacles, but that the old iron spectacles which I propose to present to a Warwickshire Museum were Ben Satchwell's real, true, and genuine spectacles. The testimonial is all-important.—I am, Sir, yours, TRACY TURNERELLI, Leamington." (Why not have a room, specially set apart in connection with the Public Library, for keeping this and other relics of old Leamington, that are now in the hands of private citizens? A local museum would soon accumulate that would be both interesting and useful.—J. C. M.)

(*g.*) It was under this well-known Warwickshire manager, Mr. Jackman, that I made my first and last appearance on any stage, and it was at the old Theatre in Clemens-street I made my *debût*. It got wind in the town that a number of small boys were wanted to represent the scholars who made up the great Yorkshire academy over which the famous Whackford Squeers presided, in order to give due effect to the play of *Nicholas Nickleby*, which had been announced with a great flourish of trumpets as having been produced "regardless of expense and under most

distinguished patronage." I and a schoolfellow named Holmes were among those who applied for an engagement, and, to our intense delight, were selected, with others, to perform the prescribed part. Our two great scenes were the brimstone-and-treacle exhibition with Mrs. Squeers, and the row in the schoolroom when the boys have it out with Whackford for striking Nicholas Nickleby with a cane. I got on very well with the treacle—there was no brimstone in it—except that I felt I had a grievance with the lady who administered it, when, instead of doing it in a kindly, motherly way, as I imagined it would have been her duty to do, by stowing the golden syrup carefully in my mouth, she tried to shovel it in with a big wooden spoon from a huge basin she held in her hand, finishing up with a parting dab of the sticky spoon on one of my cheeks that fairly brought tears into my eyes. The house seemed to appreciate this kind of thing, and yelled with delight. But my time for revenge came in the schoolroom scene. Our instructions were to fly at the tyrannical Whackford at the moment he aimed the blow at Nicholas, to pull him down on the stage, and to thrash him with anything on which we could lay our hands. "Look here," said I to my schoolmate, "when the time comes I'll collar him by the leg and pull him down, then you sit on his head, and I'll give him pepper with this," showing him the leg of a chair, something like a rolling pin, that I had picked up and secreted behind one of the wings. It came off splendidly. Whackford was rather stout, and his adipose development most decidedly lent itself to the application of the chair leg. He roared lustily, and the more he roared the more I belaboured and the more firmly my chum sat upon the roarer's head. "Pull these mischievous devils off!" shouted Squeers at last, and we were both dragged off him as the curtain came down with a run, amidst the wildest laughter and most boisterous applause. I think it was Mrs. Squeers who took me by the neck and bundled me headlong into the wings. I was promptly followed thither by the irate actor. "You little rascal!" said he—"Get out!" and he cuffed me soundly.

"What did she dab my cheek with the treacly spoon for, then?" I responded, and the man laughed heartily. I had taken the whole thing as a reality, and had conscientiously carried it out as such to the best of my ability.

(*h.*) The appointment of Mr. Churches as editor of the *Warwick Advertiser* began quite a new era in the history of that journal. Mr. Hersee was advancing in years, the Free Trade battle had yet to be fought out, and a strong hand was demanded at the helm. The paper was considerably enlarged when the new editor came, and was printed for the first time by machinery. Up to that time it had been printed by hand, and the new machine was as much in advance of the old press as the press was of a still older wooden press that I remember seeing stand in the office, and on which the paper was printed when it started in 1806. In 1852, the man who worked that old wooden press, and who printed on it the first number of the *Advertiser* in 1806, was still in Mr. Sharpe's employ, hale and hearty, and had the management of the new machine, of which he was exceptionally proud. This was Mr. Thomas Green, the Father of the Chapel, an old and faithful servant, and an authority on all historical matters connected with the ancient borough of which he was a native. Mr. Frederick Enoch, now known to literary fame, was engaged in the stamp-office department of the *Advertiser* in those days. His early poems were received with favour, and his later productions made their mark. Some lines he wrote on Kossuth's visit to Birmingham, I remember, were vigorous and striking:

> "And the great roar went up—
> As the rapt sea—
> From the great ocean of the human heart,
> Struggling to be free!"

I quote these words from memory, and was much impressed with the poem when it appeared. Mr. Enoch's family took an active part in the public life of both Leamington and Warwick in the early days of the village Spa, one of his relatives

being postmaster there for some years, and another carrying on the extensive Library at the Lower Assembly Rooms, formerly Elliston's.

(*i.*) Mr. John Fairfax left Leamington in 1838 to take an appointment on the *Sydney Morning Herald*. That journal was started April 18th, 1831, only seven years prior to Mr. Fairfax joining it. He and his sons subsequently became proprietors of the paper, and his son and grandsons are now proprietors of it and of the *Sydney Mail*. "The *Sydney Morning Herald*," says "Sell's Dictionary of the World's Press" for 1890, "is the oldest of the existing daily newspapers in Australia, and it is stated that the proprietors, Messrs. John Fairfax and Sons, have recently refused an offer of one million pounds sterling for the property." A splendid monument to the ability and enterprise of those by whom it has been built up, and the impetus to whose endeavour found its initial force at the village Spa in Warwickshire only a little more than half-a-century ago. In connection with these early enterprises, too, may be mentioned the fact that three sons of Mr. George Nelson, the founder of the gelatine business at Emscote, are themselves the founders of the great frozen meat trade with New Zealand, as Nelson Brothers, Limited. They are Mr. E. Montague Nelson, Mr. Frederick Nelson, and Mr. William Nelson. Mr. E. M. Nelson is managing director of the company, his brother Frederick is also a director, and William is the company's manager, in New Zealand. To Mr. E. M. Nelson must be accorded the honour of having invented a new method of thawing frozen meat, which restores it to its original freshness, flavour, and good qualities, equal in every respect to what it was before the freezing took place.

(*j.*) In those days the *Courier* was printed by hand, and the work was laborious. The pressman was Thomas Chetland, of Warwick, whose father kept the Brown Bear for many years, and subsequently the Rose and Crown. It was Chetland's duty to print off the first side of the paper, which occupied from seven to eight hours, and the work was generally done after 10 o'clock on Friday night. At midnight the gas would go down with

commendable regularity, and it was my business to go to the Gas-works and implore them to put on the pressure again. My part of the programme was that of fly-boy—to take off the sheets from the press, and help the heavy mass of type along on its way by pushing and pulling with all my childish might. It was wearisome work. Sleep sometimes got the better of me, and I would then tumble under the press. Once there was a tremendous explosion, and I found myself wondering why the Regent Hotel stood on its head in the cold grey light of the morning. I could never explain the phenomenon, but, wearied out, must have fallen asleep on my way home, after one of those laborious nights of pushing in and pulling out, must have walked some distance in my sleep, and woke to facts by running my head violently against a lamp-post at the Bedford Hotel, nearly a mile away. Machinery has altered all that.

(*k.*) Mr. Isaac Bloomfield was the first letter-carrier appointed officially when the village Spa became a postal district, and was a notable feature in connection with the Post-office in those early days. My recollection of him is somewhat vague, and this faintness of remembrance has led me to associate him with a later Post-office official, and to give an inaccurate description of him in the chapter in which it was originally published. He is described by those who knew him as a rather tall, portly personage, of a distinctly military bearing, which is borne out by the fact that he had been in the army. On this account he was always spoken of at the Post-office and among his intimates as "The Major." He always appeared on duty with a box hat, scrupulously polished, and there was a tradition, which could be borne out by those who knew the facts, that he never paid less than a guinea for it. I remember him very well as a great favourite on his rounds. He had a hearty, genial manner, and a kind word for everybody, with a joke and a smile or two thrown in, while his thundering and prolonged rataplan—so different to the jerky double-rap of the present day—was like a discharge of atmospheric electricity, and only wanted

lightning to make the illusion complete. It could well be heard from one end of the village to the other. As a mark of respect, the Post-office officials presented him with his portrait in oil, which is in the possession of his son, Mr. E. I. Bloomfield, Parish Clerk.

(*l.*) Previous to this the town was supplied with water from wells, and for some years the arrangement made by Mr. Oldham only gave a supply to the lower parts of the town, the reservoir being a large iron tank placed on the summit of the old mill. The carts for watering the streets were filled from the river Leam, by means of a pump, which stood on a raised platform at the spot where the letter-box of the General Post-office now is. The first, and I believe the only pump-maker and well-sinker in Leamington was Mr. S. Dowler, and he lived at Binswood.

(*m.*) My remembrance of this particular coach is made more keen by an amusing incident. It was the occasional habit of myself and another, on Sundays, to walk out a few miles beyond Warwick, meet the coach, and ride back to Leamington. One day the coach was full when we met it, and there being no room and a heavy storm imminent, myself and companion were bundled into the front boot, in which, luckily, there was only a small portmanteau. The coach pulled up at the Rose and Crown, Warwick, and the owner of the portmanteau opened the boot and began groping for his property. Two pairs of anxious eyes glared at him from the dark interior, and the owners of those eyes made a leap for liberty. The scared look of the groper after the portmanteau was something to remember, as, with a screech, he fell from the step of the coach in a swoon on the roadway.

(*n.*) The rise and progress of Odd-Fellowship at Leamington would form one of the most interesting chapters in the earlier history of the Royal Spa. Its growth and development are an encouraging manifestation of that splendid spirit of independence and self-help that we find implanted deep down in the heart and mind of those who represent the best phase of our national character—its industry, its thrift, and

its true benevolence. The following will show who have been the leaders in this great social movement, from the period of its inception, sixty years ago, to the present day, and we are quite sure that no one living who represents a name on the record of those who are gone, or who himself still remains to see his own name there, but ought to fell proud to find that name associated with so beneficent a mission. The Temple of Peace Lodge was the first of the Lodges opened at Leamington in connection with the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows in the Edmondscote District, after the old London Order became an institution of the past. Joseph Manning came to Leamington with his credentials of P.G. of the Fazeley District in Staffordshire in 1827, and helped to found the Temple of Peace Lodge at the village Spa. The first Lodge in the Edmondscote District was the Earl of Warwick Lodge, held in those days at the Hare and Hounds, Bridewell-lane (now Barrack-lane), Warwick, Mr. Richard Cole being the landlord. About the year 1850, I remember, Mr. William White, for many years overseer at the *Advertiser* office, was N.G. of the Warwick Lodge.

"Loyal Temple of Peace Lodge," 1,059, Edmondscote District, M.U., opened at the Rose and Crown Inn, Kenilworth-street, Leamington Spa, on February 29th, 1836 (at which house it still remains). List of Past Officers:—1836, W. Meldrum; 1837, J. Manning; 1838, G. Smith, T. Barr; 1839, J. Smith, J. Taylor; 1840, C. Parker, T. Watkins; 1841, W. Smith, J. Ingram; 1842, J. Sanders, M. Hodgkins; 1843, T. Watkins; 1844, T. Davis, J. Smith; 1845, W. Mason; 1846, J. Clarke, D. Feasey; 1847, R. Checketts, W. Mason; 1848, J. Errington, J. Clarke; 1849, T. H. Croot; 1850, A. Jennings, T. Bradford; 1851, D. Feasey; 1852, E. Wilmore, J. Hudson; 1853, F. Bissell, J. Grimerd; 1854, W. Mason, J. Russell; 1855, T. Blunt, J. Clarke; 1856, D. Feasey, R. Poole; 1857, C. Orton, J Russell; 1858, J. Clarke, W. Griffen; 1859, D. Sarney, J. W. Jennings; 1860, T. C. Cox, J. Makepeace; 1861, J. Rose, J. Jenkins; 1862, G. Walton, T. Olds; 1863, J. W. Jennings, J. Clarke

1864, E. Pavier, E. Hudson; 1865, J. W. Jennings, T. Olds; 1866, J. Mallard, A. White; 1867, J. W. Jennings, T. C. Cox; 1868, A. Wheatley, J. H. Rumsey; 1869, J. Clarke, jun, J Clarke; 1870, J. W. Jennings, H. McKnight; 1871, R. A. Orton, J. Mallard; 1872, A. C. Wright, J. Clarke, jun.; 1873, J. W. Jennings, J. Clarke; 1874, C. Stroud, J. W. Jennings; 1875, E. Pritchard, S. Bateman; 1876, J. Swain, J. Harris; 1877, C. Stroud, E. Pritchard; 1878, J Clare, A. G. Holt; 1879, E. Pritchard, J. Swain; 1880, E. Sprawson, C. Stroud; 1881, W. Roddis, G. Hedger; 1882, C. E. Lamb, J. Clarke; 1883, J. Swain, E. Pritchard; 1884, H. Clarke, G. R. Rootham; 1885, A. G. Holt, C. L. Green; 1886, A. White, S. Y. Lovell; 1887, J. Swain, J. H. Peyton; 1888, A Slinn, A. J. Feasey; 1889, J. H. Minty, A White; 1890, J E. Cosford, J. Mallard; 1891, J Swain, S. Y. Lovell; 1892, E. Pritchard, A. White; 1893, D. Rice, J. Mallard; 1894, J. H. Clarke, S. Y. Lovell.

List of Past Officers of Loyal Leamington Lodge of Odd-Fellows:—1840, T. Warner; 1841, J. Smith; 1842, 1843, J. Sandford; 1844, S. Davis, W. Smith; 1845, H. Sandford, W. Beddington; 1846, H. Davis, T. Murcott; 1847, W. Malins; 1848, W. Batchelor; 1849, J. Thompson; 1850, T. Murcott, W. Beddington; 1851, J. Willey, C. Wiggins; 1852, J. Thompson, T. Murcott; 1853, A. Holmes; 1854, J. Hewitt, J. Sandford; 1855, J. Ellis, J. Morgan; 1856, W. Malins, E. Cox; 1857, W. Anker, J. Thompson; 1858, J. Ellis, G Reynolds; 1859, A. Holmes, E. Powell; 1860, E. Holmes; 1861, J. Trepess, G. Gilbert; 1862, Jos. Ellis, T. Lees; 1863, T. Palmer, C Ellis; 1864, T. Wilson, T. Wiggins; 1865, J. S. Marsh, J. Batchelor; 1866, J. Perkins, E Smith; 1867, E. Perkins, A. Bailey; 1868, A. Malins, E Powell; 1869, T. Palmer, H. Thompson; 1870, J W. Knight, F. H. Simpson; 1871, C. Godfrey, W H Pratt; 1872, E. Powell, C. Vowles; 1873, R J. Key, C. Godfrey; 1874, W. Ingram, W. H. Pratt; 1875, T. Lees, E. Powell; 1876, G. Marshall, T. Astley; 1877, A. Malins, T. B. White; 1878, J. M. Lukeman, E Powell; 1879, J. Grundy, F. W. Godfrey; 1880, C. Matthews, A. Malins; 1881, G. Duckett, A. Middleton; 1882, T. S. Harvey, W. H. Austin; 1883, T. E. Steele, H.

Borton; 1884, Geo. Walton, Chas. Ellis; 1885, R. Gibbs, T. Saw; 1886, C. Boddington, Wm. K. Ekins; 1887, A Clements, H Travers; 1888, T. Collier, T. Clarke; 1889, E. Moss, E. Jenkins; 1890, Richard Wills, A. Clements; 1891, A. W. Bell, H. Smith; 1892, W. H Bister, T. Clarke; 1893, W. Vowles, G. F. Reeves; 1894, Wm. Gibbs; present officer, N.G. John Powell.

"The Loyal Guy's Cliffe Lodge" (M.U), established 1843, at the Stamford and Warrington Arms, Milverton, now held at the Golden Lion. Regent-street, and the strongest Lodge in the whole Edmondscote District, numbering over 500 members. The Lodge celebrated its jubilee by a dinner at the Town Hall, in 1893, when the Grand Master of the Order (P.P.G.M. Graham) was present, and delivered a telling speech to the largest body of Oddfellows it had been his pleasure to address. The present secretary is P.P.G.M. Chas. Canning, College Lodge, Brewery-lane, Leamington. List of Past Grands:—1844, *C. Mayow, *F. Bissell; 1845, *W. Maling; 1846, *T Smith, *L. Green; 1847, *T. Ledbrooke, *J. Robbins; 1848, *T. M'Connell; 1849, *T. Smith; 1850, *L. Green, *T. Ledbrooke; 1851, *W. King, J. Overton; 1852, *T. M'Connell, *W. Lowe; 1853, *J. Hunt; 1854, *J. Wilkins, W. Woodford; 1855, *W. King, *W. Crane; 1856, J. Spring, *W Jordan; 1857, *W. M'Connell; 1858, *T. Smith; 1859, J. Overton; 1860, G. Alliband; 1861, *C. Valentine, J. Overton; 1862, G. Alliband; 1863, *C. Valentine, J. Essex; 1864, *C. Valentine; 1865, J. Adrian; 1866, *J. Wilkins; 1867, W. Woodford, J. Adrian; 1868, S. Hicks, J. Essex; 1869, *D. Hyam, J. Adrian; 1870, R. Gregory, J. Adrian; 1871, J. Smith, *D. Hyam; 1872, S. Brierley, C. Canning; 1873, J. Essex, S. Hicks; 1874, R. Gregory; 1875, G. Pugh; 1876, H. Whittle, W. Priestland; 1877, C. Canning; 1878. E. Bailey; 1879, J. Spracklin, W. Payne; 1880, C Canning, J Newcombe; 1881, D. Hodinett, J. Spracklin; 1882, J. Whitmore, T. Powell; 1883, W. Leary, J. H. Gascoyne; 1884, J. M. Crane, C. Canning; 1885, S. Canning, T. High; 1886, E. Bailey, A. Cattell; 1887, R. M. Crane, A. E. Dawson; 1888, R. Blight, H. Bentley; 1889, A. Cattell, E. Hillyer; 1890, W. H. Allwood, J.

Loveland; 1891, W. Oates, W. T. Brown; 1892, W. Sutton, W. Wallen; 1893, W. J. Salmon, W. R. Archer; 1894, A Broderick, C. Wallen. Those marked thus (*) are deceased.

Guy's Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, No. 395, founded in 1829, is the only Masonic Lodge established at the Royal Spa, full particulars of which, and of Freemasonry generally throughout Warwickshire, are given in Chapter XVI. The following is as complete a list of Past Masters of Guy's Lodge as we have been able to obtain:— 1829, Nicholas Lee Torre; 1830, unknown; 1831, Dr: Jephson; 1832, Nicholas Lee Torre; 1833, unknown; 1834, unknown; 1835, unknown; 1836, unknown; 1837, unknown; 1838, unknown; 1839, W. Adams; 1840, W. Green; 1841, W. Barnwell; 1842, J. Flecknoe; 1843, G. C. Liebenrood; 1844, J. Egerton; 1845, R. Croydon; 1846, J. Watkin; 1847, W. S. Roby; 1848, George Russell; 1849, J. R. Brutton; 1850, J. Blunn; 1851, Joseph Stanley; 1852, F. Sard; 1853, A. Hackforth; 1854, J. Bell; 1855, W. Overell; 1856, W. Russell; 1857-8, J. Glover; 1859, H. Bown; 1860, H. Mulliner; 1861, R. Eve; 1862, Joseph Stanley; 1863, Charles Layton; 1864, John Watkin; 1865, W. Harding; 1866, John Edwards; 1867, W. H. Haynes; 1868-69, E Brown; 1870, J. Aubrey; 1871, E. Bollans; 1872, H. Poole; 1873, C. F. Crich; 1874, J. Cundall; 1875, H. Stanley; 1876, W. Green; 1877, J. Morris; 1878, N. Merridew; 1879, R. Davidson; 1880, T. Simmons; 1881, C. I. Blaker; 1882, J. E. Stanley; 1883, J. P. Beck; 1884, R. S. Whitehouse; 1885-6, G. M. Fayerman; 1887, W. H. Skinner; 1888, J. T. Barrett; 1889, H. D. Morin; 1890, P. E. Shepheard; 1891, F. Glover; 1892, W. E. Pengelly; 1893, C. W. H. Smartt; 1894, A. T. Spiers.

(*o.*) Anyone who will take the trouble to search among the tombs as they pass through Coventry Cemetery will find a memorial stone there, on which is recorded the death of William Wombwell, who died June 12th, 1849. The tablet also records the death of Ellen Eliza Bright, who passed away at Chatham, in Kent, on the 11th of January, 1850, in the 17th year of her age. The William Wombwell referred to was a nephew of

Mr. George Wombwell, and was killed by one of the elephants belonging to the show. Ellen Eliza Bright was a granddaughter of Mr. George Wombwell. She was known as the "Lion Queen," and was killed by a tiger at Rochester, the death of her cousin William taking place at Coventry. Wombwell's menagerie was at Coventry fair in the summer of 1849. The year previous there was a Godiva procession, and one of Wombwell's elephants preceded the cavalcade. This animal was supposed to be one of the quietest and most tractable Mr. Wombwell ever had in his possession, but it was the one that killed his keeper the following summer, notwithstanding. The elephants were quarrelling between themselves, and William Wombwell, as he had done many times before, went with a pocket knife in his hand to prod them to desist, when one of them snatched the knife with his trunk, champed it up, and threw it away; then getting the young man in a corner, gored him to death with his tusks against the side of the caravan. Miss Bright was the daughter of Mr. John Bright, the well-known key-bugle leader of the menagerie band, and she was grandaughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Wombwell, whose daughter Mr. Bright married. The girl was the first of the "Lion Queens," and began early to manifest that bravery of spirit which ended in her death. Even as a child she displayed that fearlessness which earned for her the title of the "Lion Queen." Almost in her babyhood she would stray into the dens, and play with the lions and tigers and other animals for amusement. It was no uncommon occurrence to see the handsome, bright-eyed little damsel, seated like a second Una on the back of the great Bengal tiger, trying to urge the vast quadruped into a walk round its cage, with a straw she held in her hand for a whip, and with no other protection than her own childish innocence of danger. She was born and reared within sound of terrible voices and discordant screams. But the yells of wild beasts and their awe-inspiring roars had no terrors for her. She and the animals grew up as playmates together, and it was the extraordinary docility manifested by the lions and the tigers at

times when, contrary to the wishes of her parents, she would run into their den to play with them, that gave rise to the idea of permitting her to take part in the exhibition. But her grandfather always had a lurking fear in the matter. Long association with wild beasts had given him a knowledge of their treacherous disposition, and he knew how little they were to be depended on. He was frequently heard to say, and the fact has since been testified on oath, that he wished in his heart there was no "Lion Queen" at all. He always seemed anxious when Ellen, who was his favourite grandchild, entered the caravan to give her dangerous performance, and was wont to express his gladness when the daring exhibition was over. One day—it was about nine o'clock in the evening—Ellen bounded lightly into the cage among her playmates as usual. The show was crowded, for the "Lion Queen" was then a novelty, the menagerie at that time being on exhibition at Rochester. Among the audience, anxiously watching the performance, were the girl's father, mother, and brother. When she entered the den, the huge lion and the ferocious tiger were so little concerned at her appearance that they lay sprawling on the floor of the caravan, and made no effort to move from their recumbent position. In her usual playful and kindly manner she coaxed the lion—a splendid brute—to get up and stand on all fours. Then she coaxed him on to his haunches, where he sat, bolt upright, as docile as a kitten, like a pet dog begging for a lump of sugar, his great eyes lazily blinking and winking at the intrepid girl who stood immediately in front of him. The tiger still lay unconcernedly on the floor of the den, and seemed to be in the way of the girl, who pushed him gently with one of her feet, and told him to wake up. He took no notice of the playful reminder, and his young mistress then lashed him lightly with a small whip she held in her hand to make him move. He immediately put out one of his colossal paws, and stripped the flesh from the leg that had offended him. Then, as if calculating the punishment that might swiftly follow this act of indiscretion on his part, and wishing to prevent

it, he crouched low for the fatal spring - reared himself in the twinkling of an eye on his hind legs, caught the lithe form of his gentle playmate in the now unsheathed talons of his two fore-paws, and drove his teeth deep into her neck and throat as she stood with her side towards him. In a moment all was terror and confusion. The animals roared and shrieked, and the audience fled panic-stricken from the place. One Stephen King, the keeper of the birds, got a long iron bar and struck the tiger violently over the head with it through the bars of the cage, whereupon the fierce brute let go his fatal grip, and, deluged in blood, his victim fell senseless to the floor, dying in a few minutes after she was extricated. The inquest was held at the Golden Lion, Chatham, and Mr. George Wombwell, who was then residing in Commercial Road, London, overcome with grief, gave evidence. The jury appended to their verdict a strong expression of opinion as to the danger of such exhibitions.

(*p.*) Yes, I think my dear old fellow-apprentice and myself are bound to appear in our proper colours in this matter. We did Barnum's printing when he brought Tom Thumb to Leamington, in 1842, I think it was, and the manager gave us an order for the show. "Come smart," said he, "and I'll introduce you to the General." Come smart! This was said about ten minutes before the show began, and our smarter wardrobes were a mile away. "I have it!" said my chum, with a readiness of resource that was at all times remarkable with him. "Clean collars and cuffs!" It was an inspiration. Shears and white cardboard were soon in active requisition, and in five minutes we had two pairs of cuffs and one of collars, dazzlingly white, superbly stiffened, and of grand proportions. A few pins put the voluminous sideboards in position, and as charity is said to cover a multitude of sins, so did those magnificent adornments put out of sight any quantity of printer's grime. If time had permitted, we would have had two pairs of white gloves cut out of the same material. So my chum and I were presented to General Tom Thumb in paper cuffs and collars, and can fairly

claim to have been the inventors of those useful articles of adornment long before one of Tom Thumb's proverbially cute fellow-countrymen hit upon the same idea years afterwards, and made a fortune out of it.

(*q.*) This gentleman deserves to rank high as one of the most energetic of that little band of early pioneers to whose praiseworthy efforts one never tires of referring. "Not to be behindhand with his generous competitors in the task of giving new attractions to Leamington," says a chronicler of the time, "the patriotic and poetical Mr. Bissett came forward. This gentleman had early in life forsaken his own bleak mountains of the north, and after a successful residence in Birmingham, at the Museum there, came to settle in Leamington, where, since honest Satchwell's demise, his purse and pen have been alike employed in its service. In 1819 he opened his Paragon Picture Gallery, and has built another establishment, to which he has given the name of the Select Cabinet of the Fine Arts, also devoted to the muse of painting. This Cabinet adjoins his fanciful residence, Belle Vue Place, Brunswick-terrace, on the promenade leading to Ranelagh Gardens." Mr. Bissett died in 1832, and Mr. John Fairfax, in his guide published in that year, makes kindly reference to him. "That early and steady, but lately deceased, friend to Leamington, Mr. James Bissett," writes Mr. Fairfax, "whose poetry, wit, and information not only pleased and instructed, but effected as much in spreading the fame and promoting the interests of Leamington as any of the efforts of its other friends." Reference is also made to the deceased in one of the later guides, in which he is spoken of as "a benefactor to the town who well deserves the gratitude of posterity."

(*r.*) A son of the late Mr. John Egerton, livery stables, nearly came to grief here. When a boy, he tumbled into a dry well at the back of one of the houses, and was there for many hours before he succeeded in attracting attention, and was extricated with difficulty. At the back of these unfinished houses was an open space of ground, cultivated as kitchen gardens, bounded on the

east by the Lower Avenue, and on the west by the Upper, with a footpath leading from the top of Spencer-street to the Upper Avenue. This footpath, fronting the old Manor House, now the Manor House Hotel, led up to a stile, and across a large field - the one in which the first All-England cricket match was played—leaving the Priory Gardens to the right, and over another stile into what was then a new road leading from the old Warwick-road to the Adelaide-bridge. About a hundred yards further along the Warwick-road, leading west, was Myton toll-gate, and when the gate was abolished the toll-house was turned into a roadside inn—the Myton Tavern—which was kept for many years by Mr. Bosworth. It was here the Printers' Society held their monthly meetings for some time, about the years 1845-50, being a convenient half-way house for the printers of Warwick and Leamington to meet at. Mr. Thomas Davies, who for some years was in business in Windsor-street, and subsequently at the *Advertiser* Office, Warwick, was secretary to the Warwick and Leamington Typographical Society at the time to which I refer.

EXPLANATORY NOTES OF REFERENCE TO THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

Page 17.

The Original Post Office.

The illustration given of the old Post Office carries the imagination back very vividly to the early days of the Royal Spa. The gate underneath the inscription "Post Office" was at the west *end* of the present building, where now is Gordon-passage, leading into Satchwell-place. The front of the cottages (invisible in this view) was on the *south* side, overlooking a garden—now Satchwell-place The *north* side (shown in the picture) looked down what is now Mill-street, and the stile shown on the left of the illustration led into a meadow, which had to be crossed to go to the mill on the opposite side. The direction under the trees led up to what is now the rear of the south side of Leam-terrace, across the stiles shown in the illustration. The site of the old burial ground is to the *right* of those stiles.

Page 25.

Old Cottages in the Churchyard.

These cottages were among the earliest of the structures erected in the ancient village. They were situated inside the churchyard enclosure, and were occupied for the most part by those officially connected with parochial work in the early days. The cottage to the right was within a few yards of the west entrance to the church, and some of the gravestones were close to the doors and windows of the cots themselves. At the back of these quaint little structures were two or three more, equally quaint, the approach to which was through a garden leading from Bath-street at the corner of Leam-terrace.

Page 50.

BATH STREET, BATH HOTEL, THEATRE, AND NEW ASSEMBLY ROOMS.

The Theatre originally stood, as represented, on the site now occupied by the successor to the late Mr. Charles Hart, tobacconist, and partly on the site in the occupation of Mr. Johnson, wine and spirit merchant. The approach to Gloucester-street is seen on the right-hand side of the Theatre, and also the east side of Bath-street as far as the passage leading down to the back of the houses. Beyond this point was a row of elm trees to the corner where the Warwick-road crosses, with the old Bowling Green in the angle. The east side of Clemens-street is seen in the distance, with the shop of Mr. H. Butler at the west corner. Curtis's Baths are visible at the west corner of Bath-street, also the Parthenon, or Lower Assembly Rooms built by Elliston, with houses and places of business to Abbotts's Baths (opposite the entrance to which stands a Sedan chair), to the Bath Hotel and coach office.

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COPPS'S HOTEL, HIGH-STREET, THE MARKET AND WISE'S BATHS.

What is indicated here as "Copps's Royal Hotel," was described in 1817 as "an extensive range of buildings, with no uniformity." This extensive range began with what is indicated as the coffee-room at the extreme left of the illustration, and terminated with, and including, the building represented as the loftiest in the picture. The coffee-room, with its entrance to the left, its little bow window, small lattice above, and posts with loop chains in front, was the old Dog Inn, which William Abbotts occupied when he first came to the village On that site now stands the shop of Mr. C. Adkins, who describes himself as a "practical boot and shoemaker"—a title peculiarly fitted for the occupier of the original site of a house which was the favourite resort of Benjamin Satchwell, himself a practical boot and shoemaker. The next portion of this "extensive

range with no uniformity" takes in the block beginning with the bracket-lamp at the corner, and ending with the low-lying structure, the entrances to which are shown by steps from the open road to the right, and by a portico approached by similar steps to the left, with "Copps's Royal Hotel" inscribed at the top. This was known as Sinker's Hotel and Boarding-house when Mr. Copps first took the place, and included the old Dog Inn as the part for licensing purposes. The terminating portion of the range, shown as lying back from the road line, and with the upper windows only visible, was known as Fisher's Boarding-house, and stood at the south-east corner of Clemens-street, the turn into that street being denoted in the illustration It was this extensive range with no uniformity, not including the old Dog Inn premises, on which Copps's Royal Hotel was subsequently built, as shown in another illustration. The old Dog premises were standing in 1842, when the palatial hotel was closed, and formed an *annexe* to the hotel building. The house at the opposite corner of Clemens-street, indicated by a decrepit-looking post, was first occupied as a shop by a jeweller, and afterwards by Mr. Henry Butler, butcher. The next building was, in 1817, known as Olorenshaw's Library and Reading-room. Some distance in the rear were Read's Baths, afterwards Lee's, discovered in 1806. The waters were both sulphurous and saline, and the spring was known as the South Well. Mr. Olorenshaw was succeeded by Mr. Bissett, who, up to that time, had his place in Clemens-street, over the Apollo Vaults. Mr. Bissett called his premises in High-street the Paragon Picture Gallery, and while he used a large room over the front shop for his pictures, Mr. Bettison took to the library and reading-room department, remaining there till he went to his new premises, the Athenæum, in the Upper-parade (then the Post-office for the New Town), and now Burgis and Colbourne's, Bedford Stores. At the Paragon premises in High-street was where Mr. George Carter, the first auctioneer in the village, had his Repository. Mr. W. Fairweather, surgeon, also had Fumigating

Baths there, in connection with the sulphur spring in the rear. Mr. Fairweather was there in 1832. It was this same sulphur spring, or Road Well, in High-street, in the rear of Olorenshaw's shop, that led Mr. B. Smart to erect, in 1816, in the lower part of Clemens-street, at the back of which the spring lay, what were known as "The Imperial Sulphurous Medicinal Fount and Ladies' Marble Baths," afterwards known as "The Bazaar Marble Baths," the Bazaar being then kept by Mr. Hughes. Between Olorenshaw's Library, as shown in the illustration, and the next building, is an open space, with palings in front. This subsequently became the entrance to Probett's Mews, afterwards Merry's, and is now the archway leading into the Crown Hotel yard. The next building, curiously approached by side steps—or was this intended to represent the old-fashioned steps outside ancient inns, by which the market-women mounted their panniers?—is what is now the Crown Hotel. It was opened first as a private boarding-house, and a portion of the building at the west end was where the Misses Walker, of Newbold Comyn, first kept their ladies' academy, afterwards included in the Crown premises, and now the site of the commercial room there. The next building shown in the illustration is what is now the Great Western Hotel, originally the Albion Hotel. Then came Wise-street, and the building on the south-west corner of that street was erected as a Baptist chapel, subsequently, and for many years, the old *Courier* office, and the place where that journal first saw the light in 1828 This was the last building in High-street leading west. The houses now standing on the opposite side were not yet built. The structure at the near corner to the right, as shown in the illustration, were Wise's Baths, afterwards Curtis's, known as the Road Well. The spring was the third discovered, and was found in 1790, more than 40 feet from the surface, 28 of which was hard rock, that had to be bored, and from a cleft in which the water was found to run. There were 13 baths, as shown in the illustration, and the water was heated by means of a boiler

connected with the chimney seen in the picture. The Market was on the high road, in front of several thatched cottages not seen in the print, and it was near the centre of the road, close to this Market, that the village horsepond lay, till filled up by Mr. Copps when he took Sinker's Hotel and the old Dog Inn. The bracket-lamp at the hotel corner, and the lamp-post on the other side near the Market, were used as oil lamps at the time the sketch was made, in 1822, from which the illustration was taken. Gas was not introduced into the New Town till 1823. It was extended down to the old church in 1830, and it was not till the Leamington Gas Company was formed, in 1834, that the Old Town was completely lighted with gas.

Page 72.

Copps's Royal Hotel.

This illustration represents the hotel as it appeared when erected on the three combined sites of part of the old Dog Inn, Sinker's Hotel and Boarding-house, and Fisher's Boarding-house. The building extended, from the south-east corner of Clemens-street, 115 to 120 feet in an easterly direction, and the portion of the Dog Inn that was left standing stood at the eastern extremity of the palatial structure. It may be explained here that in illustration (p. 62) only part of the old Dog Inn is visible, showing it exactly as it appeared when William Abbott first took possession of it, with but one bow window having posts and chains in front. Soon after Abbotts entered into possession, he added a wing at the east end of the little inn, superseded the thatched roof with tiles, and gave the cottage a plaster frontage in place of the original concrete. There were then two bow windows, with posts and chains in front. It is thus shown in one of the guides of 1826, and it remained in this state up to the time the more extensive hotel was closed in 1841, only that the posts and chains were removed and iron railings were put in place of them, the little structure lying some yards back in the enclosure. The entrance hall of the hotel, as shown in the present illustration, was 14 feet

wide. There was a dining-room 54 feet by 24, and a drawing-room of the same dimensions. At the back were extensive stables and coach-houses, with a roadway running through from Clemens-street to what is now Court-street. Hunt's waggon-office stood at the bottom of Court-street, close to the site of the old Dog Inn at the eastern end of the hotel.

Page 114.

Clemens Street and Blenheim Hotel.

The Blenheim Hotel subsequently became the Stoneleigh Hotel, and it was here the dispute arose that led to an important action for libel, referred to elsewhere. The small structure above was the Stoneleigh Tap, kept in 1837 by Mr. Pugh. Booth's-terrace lies farther on, in one of which houses Dr. Franklin lived, with whom, in his younger days, was the medical assistant afterwards known as Dr. Henry Jephson. Still farther on is the canal bridge, seen by the railings, with houses beyond. On the opposite side, near the top, is the entrance to what was known as Printer's-street, then houses and shops to an open space with railings in front. In this space were houses lying back known as Satchwell's Houses. Below was a shop kept in 1837 by Mrs. Allan, straw hat manufacturer, and another occupied by Mr. Adams, boot and shoe maker. Then the meeting-house, afterwards the Theatre, and below other shops and houses.

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Union Parade, Upper Union, Bedford Hotel, and Regent Hotel.

The left side represents the first twenty houses built in the New Town, and called Union Row. All below this range of 20 houses was for some years fields and gardens. The Episcopal Chapel at the top of the Parade was not yet built, while York-terrace and Lansdowne-place had to come. The palings enclosing the grove of trees opposite the Regent Hotel were replaced by a stone wall, and on this spot now stands the Town Hall and Corporation Buildings, Public Library, &c.

DICTIONARY OF DATES.

Leamington "Estate" valued at £4 in ... 1040
Mellent, Earl of, owner of Lillington 1042
Turchill, Earl of Warwick, owner of Leamington 1060
"Holy Well of St. Augustine" (old well), mentioned in history 1123
Canon and Priors of St. Augustine become owners of Leamington 1166
Leamington first named "Leamington Priors" 1167
Old Milverton first formed into separate parish 1220
Chesford Bridge—authorities summoned for not repairing it 1273
Edmonscote Manor House, owned by the Hugford family 1399
Willes family settled at Newbold Comyn ... 1509
Canon and Priors of St. Augustine cease to be owners of Leamington 1510
English hall-mark on Parish Church chalice ... 1532
Weaving introduced to Warwickshire by W. Sheldon, of Weston 1579
Old Well mentioned by Camden... 1586
Speed, historian, writes of Leamington Old Well 1596
St. James's Church, Milverton, register dates from 1603
Greville, Sir Fulke, "Lord of Leamington" ... 1605
Old Church restored 1624
All Saints' Church re-built 1624
Dugdale, historian, writes of Leamington Old Well 1656
Potatoes introduced into Warwickshire... ... 1660
Blome, historian, refers to Leamington Old Well 1673
Bachelors' tax levied in Warwickshire 1695
Guidot, Dr., analysed Spa water 1698
Wise family settled at Leamington 1714
Thomas, Dr., refers to medicinal qualities of Leamington water 1730
Satchwell, Benjamin, born 3rd January .. 1732
Abbotts, William, born at Long Itchington... 1736
Manor House built 1740
Short, Dr., analysed Spa water 1740

Greathead, Samuel, Esq., Guy's Cliff, returned to Parliament for Coventry 1747
Rutty, Dr., analysed Leamington water ... 1757
Russell, Dr., analysed Spa water... 1765
Dog Inn, a roadside alehouse 1772
Butler, Bishop of Lichfield born at Kenilworth 1774
Edmonscote Manor House, acquired by Earl of Warwick 1776
Dog Inn first occupied by Abbotts, about ... 1776
Satchwell starts first benefit club 1778
Bath-street, hedge growing on both sides ... 1778
Sumner, J. B., Archbishop of Canterbury, born at Kenilworth 1780
Dawkes, Thomas, dipper at Old Well 1780
Dr. Parr at Leamington 1784
Satchwell, Benjamin, first postmaster 1784
Abbotts' spring discovered 1784
Abbotts' Baths begun 1784, opened in 1787
Leigh, Hon. Mrs., visits the Spa 1788
Satchwell, Benjamin, presented an address to Dr. Allan 1788
Allan, Dr., analysed Spa mineral water ... 1788
Kerr, Dr., analysed Spa water 1789
Sumner, C. R., Bishop of Winchester, born at Kenilworth 1790
Wise's (Curtis's) spring discovered 1790
Wise's Baths (Curtis's) built 1790
Dog Inn first occupied by Sinker 1793
Bath Hotel built and opened by Abbotts ... 1793
Sinker, J., occupies Dog Inn 1794
Lambe, Dr , Warwick, analysis of Spa mineral water 1794
Leeson, Mrs., straw hat manufacturer, in business 1796
Jephson, Dr., born 1798
Old Well first enclosed 1803
Aylesford, Earl of, visits Spa 1803
Flavel, W., introduced first Russian vapour bath 1803
Siddons, Mrs., performed in Warwick Market House 1804
Gordon, Duke and Duchess, at the Spa... ... 1804
Fox, Miss, took pencil sketch of Benjamin Satchwell (see portrait, p. 21)... 1804
Holyoake, Dr., Warwick offered £1,000 for lease of Old Well 1804
Abbotts, William, died March 1st 1805
Robbins's spring discovered (foot of bridge, S.W.) 1806

Shakespeare's House, Stratford-on-Avon, sold for £210 1806
Spa Charity founded by Satchwell 1806
Satchwell Place built 1807
Duke and Duchess of Bedford reside at the Spa 1807
Bridge built over Leam 1807–1809
Couchman, Mr., builder of old bridge over Leam 1807
Stanley, George, Warwick, laid first brick of New Town, October 8th 1808
Frost, Mr., Warwick, builder of first house in New Town, ... 1808
Assessed Taxes (amount of) at the Spa, £356, in 1808
Greathead, Bertie Bertie, Esq., one of original Trustees of old Pump Room 1808
New Town, first stone laid by J. Tomes, September 20th 1808
First house in Gloucester-street built 1808
First house in Clemens-street built 1808
Spring discovered north-west of Leam (Pump Room) 1810
Lace Manufactory at Myton established ... 1810
Parade, Lower, planned in 1810
Union Row (Lower Parade) began 1810
Walker, Miss, first Ladies' Seminary in village 1810
Read's Baths (site of) High-street, first called Warwick Row 1810
Satchwell, Benjamin, died 1st December ... 1810
Shaw, Mrs., landlady Old Bowling Green Inn 1811
Satchwell, Miss, postmistress 1811
Campion, John, New Comyn Farm, Treasurer Spa Charity 1811
Satchwell, Thomas, (son of Benjamin Satchwell) collector of Spa Charity... 1811
Percy, Rev. (Warwick) occasional preacher at Leamington 1811
Mackie and Co., proprietors Ranelagh Gardens in 1811
Orange Hotel, Clemens-street, opened 1812
Bissett's Picture Gallery established at Clemens Street Apollo Rooms 1812
Billiards, first table at Apollo Rooms, Clemens-street 1812
Smith, Mrs. (daughter of W. Abbotts) at Bath Hotel 1812
Brown, Richard, collector Spa Charity... ... 1812
Pratt's Guide (the first published) 1812
Blenheim Boarding House (Stoneleigh Hotel) built 1812

Second house in Gloucester-street built ... 1812
Bells, old church, 4 in old square tower ... 1812
Sinker, J, left Dog Inn 1813
Copps, Michael, takes Dog Inn and adjoining Oxford Boarding-house from Sinker 1813
Booth's Terrace, Clemens-street, built 1813
Albion House, High-street, built... 1813
Old Theatre began building 1813
Assembly Rooms began 1813
Heavisides, W., Master of Ceremonies 1813
Old Well enclosure enlarged 1813
Pump Room erected 1813-1814
Heathcote, C. B.,master of ceremonies 1813
Smith, C. S., Warwick, architect of original Pump Room 1813
Old Dog Inn, Sinker's, and Fisher's hotels amalgamate under the title of Oxford Boarding House by Copps 1814
Cullis, J., the proprietor Ranelagh Gardens, in 1814
Post Office, Warwick, at Woolpack Hotel, in 1814
Union Row (Lower Parade) completed in ... 1814
First building in line in Regent-street ... 1814
Crown Hotel opened as boarding-house ... 1814
Pratt's Guide (second edition) 1814
Bissett's Guide, published in 1814
Rackstrow, Mrs., first manageress new upper Assembly Rooms... 1814
Village duckpond in High-street filled up by Copps 1815
Satchwell Houses, Clemens-street, built ... 1815
Spring discovered in Ranelagh Gardens ... 1815
Linden Avenue planted by Cullis 1815
Brown, Mr., Henley-in-Arden, first dentist at the Spa 1815
Loudon, Dr., analysis of sulphur springs, Clemens-street 1816
Sulphur Baths built in Clemens-street 1816
Perry, W. G., succeeds Bissett at Apollo Rooms 1816
Pinnacles added to church old square tower 1816
All Saints' Church enlarged 1816
Williams, J., proprietor Bedford Hotel, in ... 1816
Rackstrow, Mr., proprietor of Blenheim Hotel 1817
Hopton, Richard, Postmaster 1817
Sharpe, J. (Warwick), Guide published ... 1817
Old Theatre bought by Elliston 1818
Waterloo House (Wackrill and Sons) built ... 1818
Parthenon (Elliston's), Bath-street, built ... 1819
Regent Hotel opened, 18th August 1819

Greathead, Bertie Bertie, Esq., Chairman at opening dinner of Regent Hotel, August 18th 1819
Abbott, Lord Chief Justice, at opening dinner of Regent Hotel, August 18th... 1819
Copy of Leamington Guide presented to George IV.... 1819
Bissett's Paragon Picture Gallery opened in High-street 1819
George IV. visits Leamington (as Prince Regent) 1819
Warwick Gas Company formed 1821
Elliston's Library (front of Music Hall) opened 1821
Music Hall, Lower Assembly Rooms, opened by Elliston 1821
Gloucester, Duke and Duchess of, reside at the Spa 1822
Moncrieff, R. G., Guide published 1822
Cross, J , proprietor of the Bedford Hotel in ... 1822
Parsons, Mr., at Old Bowling Green Inn in ... 1822
Shrubland Hall built 1822
Duke and Duchess of Gloucester reside at the Spa 1822
Prince and Princess of Denmark visit the Spa 1822
Union Row (Lower Parade) first lighted with gas 1823
Petty Sessions first held, Apollo Rooms (monthly) 1823
Church bells re-cast, and peal enlarged to six 1824
Spire added to Parish Church 1824
Market, Abbotts-street, founded by Russell, Bath Hotel... 1824
Percy, Hon. C. Bertie, laid foundation stone of Episcopal Chapel (Christ Church) 1825
Lubbock, Library, Upper Assembly Rooms in 1825
Royal assent to *first Local Act*, June 10th ... 1825
Crosbie, Rev. B., first Roman Catholic officiating at Spa 1825
Roman Catholic Services in Apollo Rooms, Clemens-street 1825
Church-street begun 1825
Kean, Charles, realises £97 in one night at Old Theatre 1825
Old Bowling Green Inn, High-street, demolished 1825
Beauchamp-square begun... 1825
All Saints' Church enlarged 1825
Christ Church (Upper Parade) completed ... 1826
Marshall, F., first organist at the Episcopal Chapel 1826
Royal Hotel foundation stone laid 1826
Campion, John, New Comyn Farm, died ... 1826

Royal Hotel, foundation stone laid, 13th May 1826
Last manager and lessee of Old Theatre, Mr. Bennett 1826
Old Theatre closed 1826
Elm trees in Bath-street and High-street cut down in 1826
Stenton, Captain, Master of Ceremonies ... 1826
Eclipse coach begins to run, July 25 1826
Smith, Southam, Guide published 1826
Arch, Joseph, born at Barford, November 10 ... 1826
Post Office in Clemens-street in 1826
Warwick Philharmonic Society commenced ... 1826
Foote, Miss, at old Theatre 1826
Clarendon-square begun 1826
Wellington-street begun 1826
York-terrace begun 1826
Oyster Club, founded by Lubbock 1826
Charlotte-street and Brunswick-street built ... 1827
Duke of Wellington at Regent Hotel, April ... 1827
Royal Hotel housewarming (T. Tomes, M.P., in chair), June 21st 1827
Edward Foden in business at Warwick ... 1827
Lloyd, Miss, begins business at 29, Bath-street 1827
First auctioneer, George Carter 1827
Vicarage, built by the Rev. Robert Downes ... 1828
Sharp, James, jun., first editor of *Courier* ... 1828
Sharp, James, sen., Sharp, James, jun., and John Fairfax, founders of *Courier* 1828
Leamington *Courier* started 1828
Court Leet revived by Lord Aylesford, 14th April 1828
Petty Sessions began fortnightly, January ... 1828
Figgins, Vincent, supplied type for 1st *Courier* 1828
Matthews, Charles, and Mr. Yates, actors, at old Theatre 1828
Walsh, Rev. Dr., opens St. Peter's Catholic Church 1828
Spa Charity adopted Wellesbourne Dispensary rules 1829
Bertie Percy, Hon. Charles, president of Leamington Dispensary... 1829
Universal Club of Odd Fellows established at Golden Lion, September 21st 1829
First public performance of Leamington Choral Society, May 28th 1829
Mill-street Chapel erected 1829
Waterloo place began 1829
Bloomfield, Isaac, letter carrier in 1830
Gas-lighting extended 1830

Thompson, Thos., at Albion Hotel (Great Western Hotel) in 1830
Emscote Bridge—first stone laid 1830
Ebers, Mr. (from Old Bond-street, London), at Lower Assembly Rooms Library 1830
Old Town Hall, 1st stone laid, June 24th ... 1830
Parish Church lighted with gas 1830
Bissett, J., died (aged 72) August 1832
Beech Lawn (Dr. Jephson's residence) built)... 1832
Mulliner, Francis, began business at the Spa 1832
Athenæum, Upper Parade, opened, May 28 . 1832
First hon. sec. of Warneford Hospital, Dr Hitchman 1832
Foundation Stone Warneford Hospital laid, April 10th 1832
Emscote Bridge opened 1832
Cole, Rev. George, minister Guy-street Baptist Chapel 1832
Mc Donnell, Rev. James, minister at Catholic Church 1833
Oyster Club founded at Crown Hotel 1833
Elliston, H. T., lessee Upper Assembly Rooms 1833
Baptist Chapel, Warwick-street, erected ... 1833
Newbold-terrace built 1833
Hunt, Samuel, letter carrier for Old Town in ... 1833
Fairfax, John, Guide published 1833
All Saints' Church enlarged 1834
Leamington Gas Company formed 1834
Griffin, Mr., invented revolving kite 1835
Races at Leamington (first) April 20th, ... 1835
Leamington Grammar School founded 1835
Manning, Joseph (a founder of Temple of Peace Lodge, M.U.O.F.)... 1835
Mollady, John (Warwick), succeeds J. M. Lamb at hat factory 1835
Brown, W. (Warwick), appointed Clerk of Course 1835
Leamington Bank prospectus issued, April 9... 1835
Ransford, Mr., first Manager Leamington Bank 1835
Sharp, J., sen., a founder of the *Courier*, lived at 4, Wise-street in 1835
Victoria-terrace built 1836
Theatre at Upper Assembly Rooms (Elliston)... 1836
Smith, W., retired from Abbott's Baths (original) 1836
Gould J, succeeds W. Smith at Abbott's Baths 1836
Victoria, Princess (Queen Victoria) first visit to the Spa 1836
Kent, Duchess of, first visit to the Spa... ... 1836
Jenkinson, Lady Catherine, first visit to the Spa 1836

De Lehzen, Baroness, first visit to the Spa ... 1836
Conroy, Sir John, first visit to the Spa 1836
Duboski, Count (Polish refugee) resided at No. 10, Russell-street 1836
Wombwell's Menagerie in Euston-place ... 1836
Liebenrood, proprietorship of *Courier* began ... 1837
Eastnor-terrace (Warwick Road) began ... 1837
Abbotts, G., letter carrier for New Town in ... 1837
Merridew, J., Guide published 1830—1833— 1837
Oken's Crescent, Myton, began 1837
Old Town Pump removed from site of General Post-office 1837
Congregational Church, Spencer-street, erected 1838
Dickens, Charles, stopped at Royal Hotel ... 1838
Nelson's Gelatine first manufactured 1839
Demolition of old Parish Church began ... 1839
Brooke, G. V., performed at Warwick Theatre 1839
Marsh, Dr., first incumbent of St Mary's ... 1840
Victoria Bridge opened by Dr. Jephson... ... 1840
Copps's Royal Hotel closed 1841
Potterton, Mrs., sister of William Abbotts, died 1841
Leamington *Looker-on* started by J. Beck ... 1842
Hopper, Richard, History of Leamington, published 1842
All Saints' Church, new church began 1843
All Saints' Church, new nave finished 1844
All Saints' Church, new chancel built 1845
Jephson Gardens taken over by Trustees ... 1846
Tennis Court, Bedford-street, built 1846
Napoleon, Prince Louis (Napoleon III.) resides at No. 6, Clarendon Square 1847
Cambridge, Prince George of, visits the Spa ... 1847
Holy Trinity Church built 1847
Jephson Statue (by Hollins) unveiled 1847
Shakespeare's House, Stratford-on-Avon, sold for £3,000 1847
Leamington College opened 1848
Leamington Grammar School erected 1848
Holly Walk Chapel erected 1849
Theatre, Clemens-street, opened 1849
All Saints' Church clock tower and north transcept completed 1849
St. Luke's Church opened... 1850
Adelaide Bridge erected 1850
St Luke's Church opened 1850
Cemetery opened 1852
Gill and Sidney managers of Leamington Theatre 1852

"Kenilworth" cartoons (Castle Hotel, Kenilworth), painted by T. Manning 1853
Artemus Ward visits Leamington 1853
Beecher Stowe, Mrs., ("Uncle Tom's Cabin") at Warwick 1853
Glover, Joseph, proprietorship of *Courier* began 1854
Corn Exchange, Warwick, erected 1855
Nathaniel Hawthorn (American novelist) resided at No. 10, Lansdowne Circus, in . 1857
Nathaniel Hawthorn (American novelist) resided at No. 21, Bath-street, in ... 1859-60
New River Walk formed 1862
Alexandra Fountain opened 1862
Free Baptist Church, Clarendon-street, erected 1863
St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Dormer-place, erected 1863
Theatre, Clemens-street, closed 1865
Microscopical Society established 1869
Hitchman fountain, Jephson Gardens, erected 1869
All Saints' Church south transept opened ... 1869
Post Office (General) completed... 1870
Wesleyan Chapel, Dale-street, erected... ... 1870
Warwick Castle (great fire took place) Dec. 3rd 1871
Midland Counties Home founded 1874
St Paul's Church built 1874
Willes Obelisk, Jephson Gardens, erected ... 1875
Iron railings removed from Pump Room Gardens 1875
Charter of Incorporation granted to the Spa ... 1875
First Mayor of Leamington, T. S. Wackrill ... 1875
Trinity Wesleyan Chapel, High-street, erected 1876
Jephson, Dr., died 1878
St. John the Baptist's Church Consecrated ... 1878
Roman Catholic Chapel completed 1879
St Mark's Church, Milverton, erected 1879
Mr. J. Glover takes his son, Mr. Frank Glover, into partnership in the *Courier* 1880
St. Alban's Chapel built 1881
Theatre, Regent Grove, opened 1882
St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church burnt down 1883
Town Hall (New) Parade, erected 1884
Congregational Chapel, Clemens-street, restored 1886
Pump Room Baths reconstructed, and opened by the Speaker of the House of Commons ... 1887
Old Well enclosure improved 1890
Glover, Frank, proprietorship of *Courier* began March 29th, ... 1890

Golf Club founded at Leamington by the Rev. Percy Coates	1890
Adelaide Bridge (new iron structure) erected	1891
Anne Hathaway's cottage, Shottery, sold for £3,000	1892
"Shakespeare's Land," by C. J. Ribton-Turner, published by Frank Glover	1893
Turnerelli, Tracy, discovered Benjamin Satchwell's spectacles	1893

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